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ANNE GREY.

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ANNE GREY

A NOVEL.

EDITED BY THE AUTHOR OF "GRANBY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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ANNE GREY.

CHAPTER I.

DOES love—does constancy exist amongst men? Any young lady may ask that question, and every young lady may answer it in her own way—we will not promise that it will be the right one. If she has beauty, she will answer, “Certainly! How could any one doubt it?” If she has no beauty, she will say, “I have heard it does. I have read of it; but I do not believe

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it." Mamas and Papas say it is all nonsense; there is no such thing. They are older and wiser—they ought to know; moreover they have had experience.

Be that as it may, George Foley's love for Anne Grey certainly increased each time he saw her. Perhaps he was singular in not growing tired of a pretty face by seeing it often. He certainly was very singular for loving one and the same for more than a month together: more especially when that one neither frowned, quarrelled, nor coquetted with him, to keep alive his interest; seemed to like him just as well one minute as another; and, wonderful to say! never changed from a smile to a frown in the space of a whole second; but was always ready to talk, and to accost him with a cheerful air of welcome when they met. She never amused him with varieties of manner, and still George Foley continued to love the sight of

Anne Grey, and her quiet happy smile, better than any other sight in the world.

Strange anomaly! Were I not writing of common-place, good kind of people, every one would say, "How unnatural!" But so it was, and he felt more and more convinced that all accusations against her were totally unfounded. Every conversation he held with her displayed some new proof of amiable feeling, justness of thought and opinion, integrity and candour, united to the most engaging refinement of mind.

We are all, more or less, the dupes of appearances. None more so than those who profess never to be so duped. Those who, once deceived, resolve with surly disgust never again to be taken in, and wisely determine to believe the very contrary of what they behold, are no less egregiously duped than are we; but it is by themselves. It is true they gain one advan-

tage; they behold beauties of mind and heart in those in whom no one ever beheld beauties before, and who, truth to say, never possessed any. All their flints are diamonds—but then, all their diamonds are flints; they are dupes—so perhaps are we; but *we* sometimes stumble on the truth—*they* never do.

Appearances might have duped George Foley; but he trusted to them, and, as it chanced, he was not deceived. He looked at Anne, and he believed that she was faultless. If a sensible man is led away by his feelings, we are always glad when we find that they happened to lead him right; that, though he blundered forward with a blind guide, chance befriended him; and he and his blind guide did not stumble over any stones in the way.

George Foley entrusted his opinions to Isabella, and Isabella, who could not help being

captivated by the sweetness of Anne's manner, and whose feelings in all instances were apt to run away with her judgment, was now inclined to agree with him, and to readily allow there must be some mistake. Anne and Charlotte must both be in the right. Both must be amiable. She could not allow either to be in the wrong; and when her brother saw the affectionate manner of Charlotte Daventry to Anne, and heard Anne's warm praises of her, he forgot much of what he had thought before, especially as there was no repetition of the cause. He was too busily engaged in loving Anne Grey to have much time to bestow in a scrutiny of another's character, and he was unwilling to believe any ill of so near a relation of the person he loved. So he tacitly chimed in with Isabella's view of the case. There must have been some mistake; both were certainly amiable—both were delightful,

and charming, and almost perfect. The ‘*almost*’ in his mind belonged to Charlotte Daventry. The ‘*perfect*’ stood alone for Anne Grey.

Anne, meantime, gave a tacit encouragement to his love, by her unconsciousness of its existence. She liked him — thought very highly of him — found him agreeable and sensible: she felt a great regard and esteem for him: was perfectly at ease with him — considered him in the light of a sincere friend, and one to whom she loved to talk better than to most other people. There was in all this much that approached to love — and, if her affections had not been pré-engaged, who knows how it might have been?

George Foley, encouraged by the frank cordiality of her manner, by the pleasure so unreservedly displayed in conversing with him, began to hope that his affection was re-

turned. He was not aware of Mr. Temple's visit to Weston. He had heard and seen nothing of him lately; and he forgot his fears about him—forgot his prudence—his promised self-controul;—what man in love ever remembered anything he ought to have done?—and in a short time from Anne's visit to Chatterton, he proposed. As might be expected, he was rejected—firmly and decidedly, but with much to soften the disappointment of such a refusal, in the manner by which it was conveyed, in the expressions of friendship and interest, which were mingled with Anne's firm rejection of his addresses.

George Foley was ready enough, now it was too late, to see and bewail his own folly and rashness, and to wonder at his presumptuous hope. He saw that Anne had never thought of him as a lover, and he could scarcely credit his own blindness in fancying that she had—

in mistaking mere friendly liking for a warmer passion—in forgetting his pre-conceived opinion, with regard to her preference for Edward Temple. He would not ask Anne for a reason for her refusal—a reason which could be of no other use than to soothe his wounded vanity. He did not ask her, as many inquisitive lovers would have done, whether her affections were pre-engaged? for he felt he had no right to do so. Yet he would have given much to know whether her preference for Edward Temple was the real cause of her indifference towards himself.

Anne promised him her friendship, and she did it, not as the mere matter of course promise which young ladies think fit to make by way of bon-bon, to sugar over the mortification of a rejection, but with undoubted sincerity and truth. Anne could not dissemble; but fortunately, in her heart, and feeling, and mind,

there existed such goodness, and candour, and benevolence that none could feel the want of dissembling. Who would not have preferred truths from Anne Grey to flattering falsehoods from others? There was a charm in Anne's manner, which, even if it could have existed uninfluenced by feeling, would have been delightful in itself; but, flowing as it did from warmth and sensibility of heart, what could equal its fascination? George Foley felt its influence, and he quitted Weston less unhappy than he had believed it possible he could have been under the disappointment of all his fondest hopes, and his admiration for Anne Grey still encreased by the calm and dignified, yet modest gentleness of her manner towards him.

And his love!—where was that? Alas, love was not so easily turned into friendship! George Foley had good sense, and he did not

fancy that it could. He never hoped that a few words, and a few assurances that love was out of the question, and that friendship was the preferable sentiment of the two, could immediately change its nature. He felt that his love for Anne Grey would remain unchanged, and he would not wish it otherwise till all hope was extinguished by her marriage to another. Then, duty, principle, every thing would teach him to exchange it for friendship; but now, George Foley, with the perversity of a sensible, serious, steady-minded man in love, would not relinquish his passion—would not relinquish hoping almost against hope; and he fondly hoped that Time—Time the destroyer, the preserver, the friend, the enemy, would befriend him—that Time would bring him in the affection of Anne Grey, his dearest reward. And with this hope George Foley left England, and sought, amongst the ruins of Rome, lessons or the transforming powers of Time.

When Anne Grey told her mother that she had refused Mr. George Foley, nothing could exceed Mrs. Grey's astonishment, indignation, and dismay. Anne had never seen her so really angry before. She asked what she could be thinking of, in thus throwing away her happiness? she told her that she never would be happy, and nearly said she *hoped* she never would. She could scarcely believe that Anne was not in jest; and was half inclined to send a servant after Mr. George Foley, to tell him it was all a mistake.

Anne was very sorry—but what could be done? She could not say that she repented.

Mrs. Grey told Mr. Grey, and Anne had to listen to his questions as to her reason for refusing Mr. George Foley, and to answer, as she felt, with very little appearance of wisdom. She could not say that she did not like him. She thought him superior to almost any

other person she knew — very agreeable — peculiarly amiable ; and this, poor Anne with a sinking heart, and a feeling of conscious folly, candidly confessed in answer to her father's questions. She began to think, as he looked more and more grave, and put questions to her which candour and justice obliged her to answer so much in favour of the man she had rejected, that she must have behaved very foolishly ; and yet something at her heart told her it was impossible she could have done otherwise. She stood before her father self-convicted of nothing more sensible to urge in her defence than that unanswerable rhyme used against the unhappy Dr. Fell :

“ I do not like you, Dr. Fell.
The reason why I cannot tell.
But this I know full well,
I do not like you, Dr. Fell.”

Mr. Grey was displeased with Anne : he

told her that he had expected to meet with better sense from her; and that she had disappointed him, for he thought very highly of George Foley, and had looked with pleasure to their probable union. Perhaps, Mr. Grey was a little unreasonable, but he was not often so, and in this instance many will acquit him, as he left poor Anne to cry and to feel unhappy; to feel guilty of *something*; she was sure she must be guilty, or her dear, kind, indulgent father would never have been angry with her: yet she could not discover of what she was guilty, and her earnest hope was that Mr. George Foley might be so thoroughly disgusted with her conduct that he would never again wish to ascertain the state of her feelings towards him. She felt very miserable as she saw her mother's reproachful looks, heard the sharp, angry tone of her voice, and felt the absence of her father's kind, approving smile.

He soon however seemed to relent as he saw how patiently and meekly she bore her mother's sharp reproofs, and he kissed her with a greater degree of affection as she wished him good-night; and the next morning, as he saw the traces of tears on her face, he patted her cheek with his usual affection, and said — (blessed words to Anne!) “Well, never mind, Anne! It cannot be helped now—so do not fret any more about it:” and Anne was obliged to leave the room to conceal the tears which delight had called forth at such a return of kindness.

After the first unhappy day was over, she heard but little more on the subject from Mr. Grey, and she hoped that he had nearly forgotten his displeasure; but when the intelligence reached Weston that Mr. George Foley had quitted Chatterton, and was gone abroad, Anne had to endure one more reproofing look

from him, and a renewal of more open and violent upbraidings from her mother.

One trouble often chases away another! So it happened at this time. Robert Dodson, who, since his ill-fated proposal to Anne, had been absent from home, returned into the neighbourhood, and returned, as it seemed, with revived hopes. His was the very ever-green of love, and he became very assiduous in his visits to Weston.

Mrs. Grey was a cheerful minded woman. She never fretted long about what could not be helped; if (which was not always easy), that conviction would ever force itself upon her mind! Mr. Robert Dodson's renewed attentions, in the present instance, helped to convince her; and she began again to feel in good humour with Anne: she delicately hinted to her that the best way of repairing an error in one instance was by behaving well in another;

in short, that Robert Dodson would do almost as well as George Foley. Anne understood the hints; understood them too well for her comfort — saw Mr. Robert Dodson's almost daily entrance into the sitting-room at Weston, and felt all her vexation return, as she saw that her father and mother smiled in kind welcome on his appearance, and asked him each time on his departure to come again. Robert Dodson did come again, and Anne tried to be kind and to behave as usual to him, and yet every time she had succeeded she feared that she had perhaps succeeded only to do the very thing which would ensure her own unhappiness.

CHAPTER II.

THERE are moments when we feel the want of a comforter—of some one to whom we can confide our feelings, our sorrows, our hopes. Yes, our *hopes*! for hope will intrude even in the midst of sorrow. It is scarcely in human nature to despair. We cling to life even when misery is darkly spread around ; when it hangs like a gloomy cloud over the past, the present, and the future. Yet we cling to life, for one ray of sun-shine pierces through the cloud : that

ray is hope ! and when hope thus whispers we seek for a comforter to turn those scarcely audible whispers into the louder, clearer voice of certainty.

A flattering comforter ! Oh, dangerous, delusive, and therefore, earthly bliss ! But who has not gladly submitted to be deceived, where the deception is of so delightful a nature ? We all love to be comforted, whether it be by cold realities, or by warmer and more enchanting fictions. All who have griefs to need comfort ; and what happy being is there in this world of sin and trouble who has never known that hour which made it welcome ? Who is there, amongst us all, young or old, from the child who sobs because it cannot spell the difficult word of three letters, to the mature baby who frets over nobler trifles, and grieves because the fruits of to-day do not repay the cares of yesterday, who has never stood in need of com-

fort; and never gladly received the blessed gift, let it be the mere gilded bauble, bright and beautiful to the eye, or the pure and refined gold whose worth and beauty is intrinsic?

At this time Anne Grey, harassed, grieved, and annoyed, stood in need of a comforter—and she found one. Was it a false, a flattering, a deceitful one? Nay, never mind! What does that signify? Have I not said how little it matters, so that comfort be administered, whether it is false or real.

In Charlotte Daventry she found one the most considerate and the most flattering. Charlotte applauded her conduct, and advised her to pursue her course, though indeed she foresaw many difficulties in it. She foresaw that her mother would not easily relinquish the idea of her marrying some one, if not Robert Dodson. It would require great firmness on Anne's part to elude this evil—this almost sin. Yes!

Charlotte Daventry placed before her the *sin* of marrying one person, with heart and affections engaged to another. She painted, in glowing colours, the deficiencies of Robert Dodson,—the chance of happiness for one like Anne, united to such a husband! Anne recoiled from the idea. But Charlotte then sketched a more charming picture. A union with one such as Edward Temple—with every thought in unison with hers—with sentiments, knowledge, tastes, pursuits, such as she could respect, admire, and love. She painted a fascinating picture of felicity in such a union.

Anne's cheek glowed; the tear and the smile trembled together in her downcast eye. Was not happiness like this worth a struggle?

“It is well!” thought Charlotte, as she looked on her. “It is well. She loves—she *shall* love, and she shall have her reward!” and then again she spoke, and with tearful

eyes, and burning cheeks, Anne listened to her flattering words.

But there were times in which she examined *herself*. In sober moods she reflected on the course to be pursued. Charlotte had opened her eyes to the strength of her attachment to Edward Temple, and, as she anxiously questioned herself whether she were indeed acting right, whether she, perhaps, ought not to sacrifice her own fancied happiness to the wishes of her parents, she could only answer, as perhaps, a secret hope might make her desire to answer; she could only agree with Charlotte in believing her line of conduct the proper one.

To less sensitive minds than Anne's there would have been little cause of distress; but it was not so with her. She saw no way of getting out of her distresses. She was most unhappy in the idea of displeasing her parents;

and yet, by nothing but her patient and gentle submission to every unkind look and word that fell from her father or her mother on the subject, could she hope to mitigate their displeasure. Another cause for distress existed in William's encreasing love for Charlotte, and on this subject again she felt some difficulty in knowing what course to pursue; and this added to her own cause of uneasiness, gave her a greater feeling of depression and unhappiness than she had ever yet experienced.

She really stood in need of a comforter, and nothing could equal the attention, the consideration, the affectionate sympathy which was bestowed on her by Charlotte: forgetting self, she seemed to think only of her.

The gratitude and love which conduct like this called forth may be imagined, and all the affection, the warmth of gratitude that a heart such as Anne Grey's was capable of giving,

were bestowed and lavished on Charlotte Daventry.

Yes, they were bestowed, and Charlotte Daventry smiled as she saw their bestowal. Was it the happy smile of self-approving virtue? The smile of conscious benevolence? Oh, yes! if we had listened to Anne Grey—"Oh, yes! if Charlotte Daventry smiled it might well be such a smile as this! Well may she smile if the well-earned love of grateful hearts can make her smile!" Yes! Anne Grey! Such would have been your answer.

There are few people, *very* few, I should hope, who are so thoroughly unhappy as to have no one ray of comfort to which to turn—no one bright spark to shine out amidst the darkness—no one happy thought amidst a crowd of unhappy ones.

Anne Grey was not without a happy thought to turn to, and this one was of her sister, of

her dear sister Sophy! Sophy had now been married some time, and the accounts from her had always been most pleasing. In all her letters, from the period of her marriage till the present time, she spoke warmly of her happiness—of the devotedness of her husband—of her encreasing love for him — her grateful sense of the blessing of such a husband's ardent affection.

Sophy Stoketon was right in considering it such. Let all who have experienced that blessing, or who have more sadly learnt its value by its reverse, say whether indeed the devoted, constant love of a husband is not a blessing worthy to be prized and cherished. All who have known this happiness will agree with me; but still more will they, the forlorn, the wretched, the broken-hearted! who pine alone—who sit and weep over times gone by:—when the cold, neglectful husband, breathed to them of

nought but love and constancy: when he, who once watched her every look and motion, and listened to each word in eager fondness, now leaves her, lonely, deserted, — weeping, perhaps to cast his eyes of love on others,—when he now leaves the once adored and happy wife. As the tears fall silently down her care-worn face, does she not think with bitter envy of the lost possession of that treasure—the devoted love of a husband? Yes, yes! it once was her's, and she repaid it, by the full gift of all the strength, the depth of woman's calm, unchanging love! She gave her heart—her affections—her whole soul—ah! too much perhaps, forgetful of her God! and that gift which had been sought for and won, where is it now? It is despised—neglected—cast aside! She tries to smile against hope; she tries to hide a bursting heart under a placid brow; to seem happy, that thus she may chance to win back that

wavering heart. But no! He comes—he speaks in careless displeasure—in cutting sarcasm, or perhaps, still worse to bear, he scarcely speaks—he scarcely heeds her! It is too much! He sees her weep—he has seen her smile; in angry impatience he turns away muttering ‘what folly!’ and again she is left to weep alone in the bitter earnestness of a bursting heart! Yes! let those who have known the bright reverse be thankful. Let them acknowledge their blessedness! Let them cherish and guard the precious possession, so soon, so easily lost.

But why have I digressed so long from Sophy and her happiness? She spoke with delight of Alford Abbey, Lord Stoketon’s place; her new home. It was the most charming place that ever was seen. She was very impatient that they all should see it, and so was her dear George.

She was charmed with Lord Stoketon’s

mother and sisters. Nothing could be so kind and delightful as they were; so amiable, and so fond of him! They had been staying at Alford, and now she and Lord Stoketon were going to see them at Lady Stoketon's pretty house. In short, Sophy was perfectly happy.

“By the bye,” she added in one of her letters; “I forgot to tell you that I had met an old flame of mine here, Captain Herbert. It is odd enough that he should happen to live in this neighbourhood;” and she added in her letter to Anne, “I wonder, Anne, how I could ever have had any penchant for him.—So inferior to my own dear husband! But you know I never did think much about him. What a different fate mine would have been had I been foolish enough to have preferred him! George is so infinitely superior, so infinitely better calculated to make me happy.”

In another part of the letter she again men-

tioned Captain Herbert. "He is certainly good-looking and agreeable, and has rather a taking manner. I cannot help thinking how fortunate I was to escape being captivated by him. I never was so happy, dearest Anne, as I am now! Depend upon it there is no happiness like a married life! How I wish you were married: give my love to Charlotte and tell her she must make haste and marry too, and let me know the names of all your admirers."

Then for the postscript, in the same letter there was this, which I insert as a hint to those who are married, or who are not married; and for the amusement of all those of the opposite sex who love to talk and think of woman's folly.

"I have just got a crimson velvet gown from London. I believe I look very well in it. You cannot think how many compliments I get on my beauty from all the good people

hereabouts. That is all owing to being a married woman. I never had half so many before. George says he likes to see me well dressed, so I am very particular."

"Fortune, I thank you!" said Charlotte to herself as she finished reading this letter. "Fortune! I thank you that there are Captain Herberts and velvet gowns in the world!"

"Sophy writes in excellent spirits," said Anne.

"Yes, excellent! She is very happy. How I long to see her," said Charlotte; and the contemplation of Sophy's happiness, and the hope of seeing her before long, was a comforting subject to which Anne could turn from her own troubles and annoyances.

As the length and strength of her mother's lectures encreased as to the propriety of girls marrying when they were asked so to do, their wickedness in refusing good offers—the heinous

sin of ingratitude it involved—the wisdom of trusting to the judgment of their parents in all matters, but especially in the choice of the partner whom they, not their parents, were to live with, and love all the rest of their lives—as Robert Dodson's visits encreased in duration and frequency, Anne found it very essential to have one pleasing thought to which she could turn, and she thought with pleasure of the promised visit to Sophy, which would at once remove her so many miles both from Mr. Robert Dodson and her troubles at home.

Anne felt that the cares of the world had wonderfully encreased within the last few months. She felt, as many have felt before her, that life was truly not the splendid, happy thing she had imagined it as a child. If each year troubles were to increase as they had done in the last—if the prophecy of kind old gouty

friends, great aunts and uncles, grandmothers and grandfathers, were realized, that promised her every year with considerate kindness, "that she would never be so happy again"—"that she must never expect to be so happy as she was now;" Anne felt that in life there was much to suffer, much to make her turn away from its troubles and vexations with an aching heart and tearful eyes.

"Yes," she thought, "life at last is revealed to me in its real colours. I was unwilling to believe what I was told, but it is too true! There is indeed no happiness in the world! I saw and felt as a child. I now can see and feel as a woman. If this life were all," thought Anne, and the tears started to her eyes, "it would indeed be little worth desiring."

The tears rolled down her cheeks: they fell fast for a while: it was the thorough awakening from the childish dream of hope and joy—

of hope and joy on earth. It was this which caused them to flow.

The beautiful is vanished, and returns not !

Coleridge.

But her tears were checked. A brighter hope soon chased them away. A subdued, yet radiant smile took their place. The dream was gone ! but she woke to a brighter reality ! Hope and joy were not extinct ; their nature alone was changed. They rested on certain, not on transitory things !

Oh ! thou who dry'st the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be,
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to Thee !

.

When joy no longer soothes, or cheers,
And even the hope that threw
A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
Is dimmed and vanished too !

Oh, who would bear life's stormy doom,
Did not thy wing of love

Come brightly wafting through the gloom,
One peace-branch from above !

'Then sorrow touched by Thee grows bright
With more than rapture's ray ;
As darkness shews us worlds of light
We never saw by day.

Moore.

CHAPTER III.

WILL it be supposed that Anne Grey's view of life was always gloomy? Will it not be supposed that, though there was truth in her feelings, there was likewise some exaggeration?

The young are apt to exaggerate: they run into those extremes either of misery, or of happiness, from which calmer and more experienced minds are free. Having once felt disappointment, they expect always to feel it; having once experienced sorrow, they expect always to expe-

rience it. Whilst their hearts are bleeding under the bitter wound, they cannot look forward; they have not learnt to raise their hearts beyond the storm; they cannot lift their eyes to a farther prospect, or submit in quiet cheerfulness. But another moment — joy returns! unexpected welcome joy! and where is the gloom? Like the morning mist which fades away under the bright, dispersing rays of the sun, all is vanished. All now is joy; there is no unhappiness in the world. It was a phantom—all is, all must be sunshine; and so youth feels, despairs, and trusts again; by turns all joy—all misery—all hope.

And yet there *is* an awakening to life, from the bright, child-like dream of bliss. There is —there must be! for life is not that enchanting thing that in childhood we believe it to be; that life of summer sunshine and song which we behold in youth. We know it is a life of strug-

gles, of tears, of endless toils. Yet let the young awake from their dream and look with steady eyes upon reality. Life is there before them ! It has its bitter griefs : but, shrink not—it has more ! it has its calm content, its hope beyond this life—its heavenly hope. All is not woe ! and, with a heavenly hope before us, we still may turn with thankfulness to earth, and say with gratitude, that there is happiness even here.

Shall we then believe that Anne Grey's view of life always remained the same as at that moment, when care and trouble seemed to surround her ; when for the first time the world in its sad reality burst upon her heart—or shall we wish that it should ? Must we not wish that much which then she felt should remain ; but that still whilst the heavenly view is fixed, the earthly one should be softened from the cold loneliness with which *then* she depicted it ?

There was exaggeration in her view; and Anne soon perceived there was. She acknowledged that life was not so entirely a scene of suffering; that the duty of cheerfulness would not be always a task.

And what, it will be asked, opened her eyes to the conviction of her exaggeration? Like other things of greater import it was effected by a trifle! Mr. Grey returned from a ride to Chatterton, and on his entrance into the room where Mrs. Grey and Anne were seated, he said "I found Mr. Temple just arrived at the Foleys': they have a few friends coming to-morrow, and they wish us all to go and meet them. What do you say, my dear? I gave no positive answer."

"Oh, certainly we will go," was Mrs. Grey's answer.

Anne went out of the room as soon as she was satisfied that the invitation would be accepted, to conceal a little flutter of pleasure.

The party went to Chatterton. Anne was met by Mr. Temple with undoubted pleasure. He shook hands most cordially with her father; he was very gracious to her mother, and listened patiently to her remarks of "how glad she was to have the pleasure of seeing him," "how much she had feared it would have rained in the morning," and "how much pleasanter a drive was without rain."

He then turned to Anne—the happy smile on his face seemed to say, for his reward. Never had his manner expressed so fully that she could reward him, and Anne forgot her melancholy view of life, as she listened that evening to his conversation, which was addressed almost exclusively to herself. She thought he had never been so agreeable: some of the party that he had never been less so.

William Grey might safely have accepted the Foleys' invitation to Chatterton, for Frank

Crawford was not there. William had not known this; and as he listened to Charlotte Daventry's animated expressions of pleasure at the prospect of the visit, he suddenly remembered he could not be of the party; as he owed a visit to an old college friend who had always been pressing him to come and see his parsonage. He refused the offer of Charlotte's hand as she said 'Good bye,' in getting into the carriage; walked into the house;—scolded the servant for not bringing his gig to the door an hour sooner than he had ordered it;—declared the horse looked as rough as if it had been out at grass all winter; and drove nearly at a gallop the whole way to his friend's new parsonage.

When there, he thought he never had seen a more ugly, uncomfortable place in his life, or ever known so rapid a change, as that in his old friend, from an agreeable companion, to one of the greatest bores on earth.

The next day he thought the house and his friend more bearable ; and on the next he heard that Frank Crawford was not at Chatterton : he thought he never had seen a more charming picture of a parsonage, and of clerical comfort ; or ever known a more sensible agreeable companion than in his old friend. He trotted his horse steadily, but briskly home on the third day, and as his father and mother, Anne and Charlotte drove up to the door, he was walking before the house ready to welcome them. He let his mother nearly fall, by taking away his hand just as she was depending on its assistance up the steps, to help Charlotte Daventry to descend from the carriage. He forgot to say ‘ how do you do ’ to Anne, till he had followed Charlotte into the house ; carrying her shawl for her, which Charlotte had thrown over his arm, with laughing familiarity, and a playful command to be useful. It seemed that the shawl

must be very useful to William for he was not inclined to return it. Charlotte had to ask twice for it, and to take it herself from his arm, before it was restored.

“ Well, Anne,” said William at last to her, “ you look better again. I am glad to be able to compliment you on your appearance. You looked wretchedly before you left home. Chatterton air, eh ! Anne ! Come, we’ll have you a good girl after all ;” and Anne was in danger of relapsing into her wretched looks again, if this was to be the subject to greet her at home.

She looked imploringly at William, and began endeavouring to open the newspaper which lay untouched on the table, but without success.

“ You have learnt one precious art since you left home, Anne,” said William, after looking at her for a few minutes. “ You have learnt the least easy way of opening a paper. Come, try again ! or shall I help you ?”

Anne, said "William!" in an imploring tone, and William laughed and said "Well, it is too bad, and we will wish them all a safe journey to Rome, and may they never come back again! There is a toast for you Anne."

"Thank you," said she, hiding her face behind the newspaper which at length was opened, and glancing apprehensively towards her father to see if he were listening. It was a satisfactory glance. Mr. Grey was deep in a business letter. Anne had changed her mind about the newspaper; after all her trouble, she thought it not worth looking at, and layed it quietly on the table.

"I am charmed with Miss Foley, William," said she to her brother. "She improves so much on acquaintance."

"Yes, I told you that, long ago," said William; "before I had seen her three times I told you she improved on acquaintance. That is

a borrowed opinion of yours, Anne. Try again."

"Well then, Miss Foley is very unaffected, and has a great deal of information. Will that do, William?" said Anne, laughing.

"If you mean it as something new, certainly not. But never mind! there is nothing new under the sun."

William saw Charlotte Daventry out of doors, amusing herself with the gambols of a favourite spaniel; he left the room, and was presently thinking nothing so interesting as the exuberant joy of a black and white spaniel.

The next day Anne was sitting with her mother in the drawing-room, when the door opened, and Mr. Foley and Mr. Temple were announced.

Anne's blush of pleasure could not be concealed: Mr. Temple perhaps thought it much to be preferred that it should not. She had just

hoped that no visitors would come that morning, and Mrs. Grey had just agreed to the hope : but Mr. Temple was very agreeable, and Anne might be excused for changing her opinion.

Soon after their arrival Mr. Grey came in. He invited Mr. Temple to Weston for a few days, he left Chatterton, and Anne thought at the moment that no virtue was comparable to that of hospitality. Soon afterwards Mr. Temple turned to her.

“ I am so determined,” said he, “ to see how you will get out of the difficulty of washing over that old woman’s white cap in your drawing, Miss Grey, that I am coming here next week—thanks to Mr. Grey’s kindness. Nay, do not tell me,” added he, seating himself once more by her, as Anne was beginning to exculpate herself and her old woman. “ Do not pretend to say that you are not in a difficulty. At any rate, do not tell me. Let me have the pleasure

of uncertainty—at least when it is upon nothing more than an old woman's cap. Uncertainty," continued he, after a slight pause and looking at Anne, "Uncertainty is not so pleasant, or endurable in all things."

Anne smiled, but felt a little confused by Mr. Temple's look and manner, as he uttered the last words. She said something about the charms of uncertainty, which she certainly did not feel. Something, no doubt, very new and very sensible, only unluckily it was not quite intelligible. Uncertainty had insinuated itself into her meaning.

"I cannot feel the pleasure of uncertainty," said Mr. Temple, in reply to her confused *éloge* on its charms, "in anything more serious than the fate of a drawing. But if certainty is denied me, do not deny me the pleasure of anticipation. Let me at least anticipate a friendly welcome, Miss Grey," he continued, lowering his voice, and eagerly looking at her as he spoke.

Anne's blush was her only, perhaps her best, reply; Mr. Foley was taking leave, and Mr. Temple was obliged to take leave also, not without showing that he did it with regret; and Anne was left to the pleasures of anticipation. How often does the pleasure of anticipation exceed the delights of reality! How often do we turn from the long-expected event, which in anticipation has filled our hearts with gladness, and say, Is this then all? Was this worth the fluttering hope which made us neglect present happiness? The childish visions of pleasure to come which have caused the cheek to flush, the eyes to sparkle, and the heart to beat tumultuously—we all know, we all prophecy with demure wisdom to be vain and certain of disappointment. We can see for *others*, but we choose to shut our eyes for *ourselves*. Why is the present always the thing least charming, least enviable in life! Why, that which *is*, so inferior to

that which *is to be*? Is it not because we are but travellers through life? The pilgrim looks forward in the land through which he is passing: his looks cannot rest on the road, which is but the passage to his home: the present is not for him, nor is it with us. We look onward—we anticipate. It is a feeling implanted in our nature. For ever disappointed, yet still untaught, we again look onward. And let us do so — let us not dwell in stupid indolence on the present. We may cast our hopes forward, for true it is that our home is not here—that we have no abiding place on earth—that we are passing forward to a land of promise—to the home of Eternity.

CHAPTER IV.

AT the expected time Mr. Temple came to Weston, and satisfied himself about the old woman's cap; and he admired the cap, and the old woman so much, that he longed to call them his own. " Miss Grey could not refuse to give him a drawing about which he had felt such a lively interest!"

But Anne did refuse, and the drawing became very valuable to her; probably as a memento of her firmness, because she had

refused to part with it ; for it had had no particular value to her before.

However that might be, it was carefully preserved ; and when, some time afterwards, Mrs. Foley selected it, as the very drawing to suit her Album, Anne blushed very deeply ; said something about keeping it to copy ; and substituted another in its place.

Anne found that each day spent in the society of Edward Temple encreased the danger of loving him too much. She found that his agreeableness was not of a kind to decrease on more intimate acquaintance ; that his powers of conversation only seemed to encrease, as time gave greater opportunity of judging of them. His sentiments remained the same. *They* were steady as they should be : but there was a continued charm of novelty in his manner of expressing them.

He talked much to Anne ; and she felt, that

to hear him converse, was the most delightful thing that imagination could picture. He instructed—he amused; he was gay or grave, lively or serious; yet never was either at the wrong moment. To the world he was the clever and fastidious Mr. Temple; but to Anne he revealed himself in a superior character; as the man whose feelings, tastes and principles would ensure the happiness and form the charm of domestic life. Edward Temple dropping the light tone of the mere conversation of society, had often talked to her of feelings, and opinions; and Anne felt, as she listened to him, that she needed no excuse for having bestowed her affections on an object so worthy. She felt no longer any shame in owning to herself that she loved him; yet it seemed to her modest, unassuming nature too presumptuous to believe that she could really have gained the affections of one so perfect as Edward Temple.

There is a shrinking modesty in some minds which will scarcely allow them to believe what vanity long before, in most, would have magnified into certainty. Had Anne Grey possessed any of that little, flattering, womanly quality, she would have been certain, long ago, that Edward Temple loved her. But now, though word and look and manner told that tale, because she wanted that self-consoling gift, she doubted : though at last even she could doubt no more.

Ah ! Anne Grey ! why believe what he wishes you to believe ! Had it been soothed and flattered vanity alone that was touched and confided ; then it would have little signified ; then you might safely have believed, and you would have escaped unhurt ! But it was not vanity. It was your heart that was touched ! and where confiding vanity is safe, the confiding heart escapes not so unscathed.

Mr. Temple was now often at Weston. He always met Anne with an appearance of pleasure which she could not believe to be feigned. He entered with interest into everything which appeared to interest her. He took evident delight in her pursuits, and loved to talk with her of the books she was reading, and to mark the impression which they made on her mind. He was solicitous to hear her opinions, and to find that they coincided with his own. In her music, and drawing, there might be a selfish pleasure, mingled with his interest ; for he was passionately fond of both ; but still it was not on that account the less delightful to Anne. He had so much to say and to remark on them, that she felt that there were new and hidden subjects of pleasure, belonging to both, which she had never before imagined. He had always something new and entertaining to say on every subject. Anne, whose quick perceptions,

and refined, and intelligent mind, had long been without any one to call forth its powers and sensibilities, experienced the full delight arising from the society and conversation of such a person. Not only her heart, but her understanding, was captivated; and when the time drew near for her to leave the neighbourhood, and she knew that she could not then see Edward Temple again for some length of time, she was forced to allow that she felt sorrow even in the prospect of a visit to her sister.

In his last parting with her, there had been so much beyond mere friendly regret in his manner of alluding to the longer separation which was about to take place, that Anne might well flatter herself that it could only proceed from a still warmer feeling than that of friendship. Still he left her without any explanation, and perhaps none was intended before her departure. He had, it is true, half

asked her not to forget him. He had said or rather he had insinuated, that, however a few months might change *her* feelings, *his* could never change—the absence of years, or of months, could alike effect no change in him. He had spoken of his fears—Anne's heart whispered that he might have spoken of his hopes; but she only blushed and turned away her head as he spoke, or looked at her.

Edward Temple had said much that Anne could not forget: much to remember, and think of, and treasure up in her heart during the separation from him; much to make her hope that on his last visit to Weston, before her departure, all might be explained.

He came at the appointed time. There was a party staying in the house, consisting of the Foleys, Lord and Lady Hadley, Lady Emily Harville, Sir Henry Poynton, Anne's still constant friend and admirer, and a few other gentlemen.

Anne did not see Mr. Temple on his first arrival, for he had been late. She had vainly lingered in the drawing-room till the dressing bell had rung too long to allow her any more excuse either of work, drawing, music, or book, to engross her attention or to be put away, to delay her toilet. She had but just got to the top of the stairs, when she heard the door bell ring, and Mr. Temple was certainly come.

“How provoking!” thought Anne. “If I had only stayed a moment longer!” and then, as she opened her door she blushed at her folly; and her heart beat rather quickly, as the task of dressing proceeded. She thought no half hour was ever before so long—no operation so tedious as that of adorning her person! And yet, when it was time for her to go down—when she was dressed—the last curl arranged, the last pin placed, the rings, the bracelets

put on, the gloves in the hand—then Anne felt that a little more time would not have been unacceptable to gain composure before she went down and met Edward Temple.

Courage, however, never came with passively waiting for it! and so Anne perceived, and she walked down, and entered the drawing-room, not looking the less lovely for the delicate colour of agitation which tinged her cheek.

Mr. Temple was in the room. He had been talking to Mr. Foley, and was telling a good story for the entertainment of him, of Lady Hadley, and of Lady Emily Harville, who were all three listening, and evidently with great amusement.

As Anne opened the door, she saw his quick glance to ascertain who entered; she saw his smile of pleasure—she heard him say in a hasty manner to Lady Hadley, as they were

all eagerly listening for the finale of his story, “ Lady Hadley, I am sorry to disappoint you ! But I make a point never to finish a story. It would be doing the greatest injustice to the imagination of my auditors, to suppose they could not finish it themselves ;” and then turning away from the exclamations of “ Pray go on !” “ How provoking !” from all three, he was in a moment at Anne’s side, and, having shaken hands with her, and seen her half bashful, half delighted look, as he addressed her, he seated himself by her.

Anne was separated from Mr. Temple at dinner, and could only see, from the opposite side of the table, that Lady Emily Harville made many attempts to call forth his agreeableness, and failed. Edward Temple chose rather to watch Anne Grey, who, conscious of being observed, could seldom withdraw her attention from Sir Henry Poynton, who sat

by her. He never before had so fully possessed her apparent attention to his interesting stories ; and never possessed so little of it in reality. But a suspicion of the truth sometimes flashed, even across the rather obtuse mind of Sir Henry, when a ‘ yes ’ instead of a ‘ no,’ fell from the pretty lips of his sweet ‘ Miss Anne Grey,’ and a bright smile lighted up her eyes, when, having reached the climax of misfortune, he almost hoped that a sympathetic tear might have been trembling there.

In the evening, Edward Temple devoted himself to Anne ; and, whilst listening to his entertaining conversation when others were near, his more serious, expressive tone when apart with her, that evening, glided quickly and happily away. He had all but confessed his love. He had all but asked her for a return ! and Anne was left in the delightful

conviction, that the looked for avowal must shortly follow.

Fate, or Robert Dodson, the next morning seemed perverse. Soon after breakfast Robert Dodson arrived. He was merely come for a morning visit, but Robert Dodson carried his ideas of a morning visit to the full extent of the term, and generally remained the whole morning. Unfortunately a chair happened to be vacant at the side of Anne. There he seated himself, and was so persevering in his civility, that Anne could only think with a sigh of the different manner in which that morning might have been passed, as she resigned herself to her fate, and tried not to think of Mr. Temple.

Mr. Temple was not so forbearing as Anne. He evidently considered Robert Dodson a bore, and that it required a large share of self-command not to be out of temper with him.

“How impossible it is always to be in a good humour!” said Edward Temple, to Lady Emily Harville, as he threw himself into a chair with something like a groan, as in despair, he relinquished Anne to the surveillance of Robert Dodson.

Charlotte Daventry was seated near, and had been talking to, Lady Emily. Mr. Temple had seldom spoken much to her of late. He might, perhaps, be too much engrossed with Anne! She looked at him for a moment as he spoke. She had been watching with anxiety as he talked to Anne, and now as he addressed Lady Emily she gazed upon him intently for an instant, whilst a bright flush passed across her brow: a heavy sigh burst from her lips, and she bent over her work the instant after, as if she strove to conceal some strange and painful emotion.

But Edward Temple did not observe it. He

seemed more occupied with his own thoughts, and with watching Anne Grey, as she listened to Sir Henry Poynton's never-ending adventures. At length he seemed to rouse himself, and began to talk to Lady Emily Harville. Charlotte Daventry once more raised her head from her work, and fixed her eyes upon his countenance. It seemed as though she were endeavouring to read his thoughts. What was there in her gaze? It was singular. There was a mournful tenderness, an intensity of interest expressed in her large dark eyes that any who forgot her affection for Anne might have interpreted into a different feeling than that of friendly interest. Surely love dwelt in that gaze! Edward Temple chanced to turn towards her: their eyes met:—he looked for an instant:—the look that met his was not to be mistaken: he turned away with a half scornful, contemptuous, and disgusted air. Charlotte Da-

ventry abruptly rose; the colour mounted to her face—to her temples: she rose and quitted the room.

There was something in Edward Temple's manner to Charlotte, at various times, which surprised and puzzled Anne. She could not understand it, and, at last, she had ceased to try. We know that once his attentions to Charlotte had caused a little feeling of jealousy. At other times his inattention, his almost rudeness, his unkindness of manner had vexed her in a different way: on one or two occasions he had begun to speak to her of Charlotte, had seemed as if anxious to warn her of something—Anne scarcely knew what! he had almost insinuated that she ought not to trust her—to love her so confidingly and unreservedly. Charlotte seemed perfectly unconscious of any thing. She praised Mr. Temple warmly, and appeared to feel all,

if not more than all, the natural interest in him, as one beloved by her cousin.

Anne could not fathom the kind of mystery that seemed to hang over Mr. Temple's conduct with respect to her. She felt at times inclined to accuse him of caprice and of unkindness—but then it was Edward Temple! *He* could not be capricious or unkind!

The evening passed. There were no opportunities of private conversation, and Anne retired to rest without any explanation having ensued, but comforted by the feeling that it had probably been desired. She had now only one morning more. However anxious Edward Temple might have been to prolong his stay at Weston, Anne knew that he was obliged to leave on the morrow. He was summoned to Paris on business relating to a friend, which admitted of no delay, and which, he had told her, would keep him absent for a month and

probably, even for a still longer period. He meant to stay till after luncheon, and Anne could not conceal a little smile of pleasure as she heard him asking her mother's permission, at breakfast, "to annoy her so long."

Anne had just wished good - bye to the Hadleys, and to Lady Emily Harville who had come with them; she had seated herself to a table in the drawing-room to finish some music she had been copying, and she had left Sir Henry Poynton busily occupied in a conversation with Charlotte Daventry, which she felt sure would last till luncheon-time. Edward Temple could not resist the attraction into the inner drawing - room where Anne was seated. He followed her, seated himself by her—began to speak on indifferent subjects, but soon returned to one more interesting; he began to speak of love—of hope—of fear. Anne's heart beat quick, she half

averted her head to conceal her confusion and happiness, but she was saved—Sir Henry Poynton, provoking man! Sir Henry Poynton actually had the barbarity to leave Charlotte Daventry, and to come and interrupt the conversation.

He came with his usual perseverance, drew a chair close to Anne, and, looking at Mr. Temple, begged to know what he was talking of. Edward Temple left it to Anne to answer. With an ill-concealed air of mortification he turned away, took up a book, and pretended to be engaged in reading.

Anne tried to reply, to understand Sir Henry Poynton's questions, but she completely failed! She had not the slightest idea of the meaning of anything he uttered; at length she got up, said she thought of walking: Sir Henry offered to accompany her—she thought she would not, and then, as she saw Edward Temple looking

anxiously at her, blushed deeply at her seeming fickleness.

However we all know that ‘second thoughts are best,’ and so she adhered to her resolution of not walking, and met with her reward. Sir Henry Poynton soon left her to speak to Mr. Foley in the adjoining room, and she was once more left alone with Edward Temple.

The book was dropped. His eyes were turned towards her. He spoke, but it was in a hurried manner, for it seemed that Sir Henry was about to leave Mr. Foley and join them again.

“Miss Grey,” said he, in a low agitated voice, “I have much I would say to you, but there is no time. I find I am scarcely to be allowed a moment—I cannot say what I wish—I cannot explain my feelings. But I must not speak of it now—it is too late—I am again to be interrupted.—But you understand me? You will

forgive me my abruptness? One word to tell me I need not despair—that when I meet you again I may be allowed to explain! I ask but one word,” he continued in encreasing earnestness and tenderness of tone and manner, whilst Anne, too much agitated to speak, continued silent. “One look, one word! if you will not bid me despair! Dearest Miss Grey, will you refuse me all hope?”

“No, no,” said Anne, in a low and hurried voice, as for an instant she turned towards him.

Her hand was taken; silently pressed in his. There was time for no more—Sir Henry Poynton had uttered his last words to Mr. Foley, and was close to them. But Edward Temple was satisfied: the words—the look of Anne as she turned was sufficient.

And Anne likewise! she felt that she had indeed heard enough to ensure her happiness.

She felt that she stood engaged to Mr. Temple ; that he had engaged himself to her almost as certainly as if a longer explanation had taken place. There had been time for no more than those few words, but those were sufficient ! Anne was assured of his love : she could not doubt it ; and he was assured of hers.

As Edward Temple took leave, he pressed her hand, and said in a low voice, as he earnestly looked at her, “ I have dared to hope ! You will not forget me then, Miss Grey ? ”

Anne’s look was the reply—the promise that he should not be forgotten. It was read—fondly watched, and ardently returned. But the hand was obliged to be relinquished. He could linger no longer ; and in a few minutes more Edward Temple was gone.

In the first moments after his departure, Anne was too much agitated with delightful recollection to allow even sorrow for his depar-

ture to find a place in her mind. There was a confusion in her happiness which rendered her for a time incapable of thinking and feeling anything, but that one delightful conviction that he loved her.

CHAPTER V.

“WHERE is Charlotte?” said Mrs. Grey, when the door was closed after Mr. Temple’s departure. “Where is Charlotte? She was not in the room when Mr. Temple went, I think. What can have become of her?”

“I will go and look for her,” said Anne, who was not sorry to leave the room, at a moment when her thoughts and feelings were so overpoweringly occupied; moreover she longed to confide to Charlotte the happiness which was

swelling in her breast. Charlotte had been her confidante throughout, and had appeared to sympathise warmly in her feelings.

Anne went to her room. She knocked at the door ; but no one answered, and she went in to see if Charlotte were there ; and as she entered she saw her standing at the opposite window. Charlotte was roused on hearing the door open, and hastily turned round.

As she saw Anne, she looked wildly at her ; lifted her hand and advanced a step with an attitude of defiance, whilst her eyes flashed, and she half screamed out “ Must I bear this—this too ! I cannot—will not !—You are come to see—to look—to—” but she suddenly stopped : looked on the ground, and then again at Anne ; but it was with an altered expression to that which had the moment before struck with surprise and horror upon the heart of Anne ; it had faded, and she looked up with a smile on her face.

“ Well Anne,” said she, gaily, “ What do you think of my bit of acting? You must have thought,” and she took up a bottle which was on the table by which she stood—it was a thick glass bottle which had contained some perfume—“ You must have thought that I had been indulging in some private potations from such as this!” holding up the bottle and laughing.

She had scarcely uttered the words when the bottle which she held broke in her hand. The colour fled from her cheeks : Anne hastened towards her, to ask whether she had hurt herself, was assured she had not, and then stooped to pick up the scattered pieces of glass, whilst Charlotte, pale as death, muttered to herself in a low deep voice, inaudible to Anne; “ That was a rude grasp—it was a rude grasp!” and she gave a convulsive shudder as she twice repeated the words, whilst her eyes were steadily, yet vacantly fixed on the ground.

Anne looked up as she saw the shudder. “I am sure you are hurt,” said she in alarm to Charlotte. “Dear Charlotte, you look pale,” added she, with increasing alarm, as she saw Charlotte’s face pale as death. “It must have hurt you.”

“No, indeed,” said Charlotte, “only a scratch. There is no blood *yet*!” she said, as she seated herself on the foot of the bed, whilst Anne went to a table for water.

“A scratch indeed! The wound lies deeper—deeper than this!” and the convulsive tremor again shook her whole frame.

“Yes,” said she aloud to Anne. “I find I am a little hurt—a little scratch! But I would not allow it at first, for fear of alarming you. There, it bleeds now, you see:” and there was a wound in the inside of the hand, which began to bleed, as Charlotte stretched it out to Anne.

Charlotte shuddered again as she saw the blood.

“I am a fool about blood, Anne!—look, it did not bleed till you came near. I shall say, Anne,” trying to overcome her fright, and smiling gaily, “I shall say that you are my murderess, as the blood only flows on your approach! You know the old superstitious test of a murderer? If the real murderer was brought into the presence of his victim, the dead body paid him the compliment of bleeding. Now you see, Anne, the blood has flowed only on your approach. How will you be punished? decapitated! or hanged! or—shall I stab you to the heart?”

Charlotte did not look at Anne as she finished her sentence. She was stooping to look at the hand which Anne was bathing. The last words were uttered, after a moment's pause, in a lower voice, and Anne feared she must be suffering,

from the marked difference of her tone, and the expression of pain, and almost anguish, with which they were half inaudibly muttered.

“I will bear to be decapitated, hanged, or stabbed to the heart—”

“Will you?” said Charlotte, raising her head quickly, and looking at Anne who was still speaking,—

“Or stabbed to the heart by *you*, Charlotte,” continued Anne, half gaily, “if you will only confess how much you are hurt, and let me have Hickman to doctor your wound.”

“*Confess!*” said Charlotte, looking up wildly: but as Anne mentioned Hickman she smiled. “Ah! very well! If you like. But really I have no great hurt to confess; only I told you I was foolish about blood.”

Anne rung the bell. “It was extraordinary,” said she, “how it could have happened. It must have been a very brittle bottle.”

“ My piece of acting has ended ill,” observed Charlotte, “ for it has frightened you, and frightened me too. But I shall soon be better, and ready to hear—all about it—about *him* !” She slightly shuddered as she uttered the last words. “ Ah ! a twinge again,—this provoking hand !” and she started up and almost stamped upon the ground, as if overcome with pain into all loss of patience.

“ Anne, what a child I am ! am not I ?” she said, as she again quietly seated herself. “ Was that colour brought by me or by *him* Anne ?” smiling at her. “ Ah ! both I see ! we must talk about that by and bye.”

“ No, no, Charlotte,” said Anne, colouring still more. “ Never mind that ! I can only think of you now ;” and her face and manner expressed as much as she said.

Charlotte looked at her for a moment ; and admiration, or some other powerful emotion, was strongly expressed in her countenance.

At this moment the housekeeper entered. The hand was looked at, properly pitied, wondered over, doctored, and carefully bound up by Mrs. Hickman.

Then Charlotte turned gaily to her cousin, and said, "I am better and braver now, Anne. I was a sad simpleton, to make so much fuss about a scratch. I was quite upset by it; but I believe I was not very well before. And now Anne, go down again, and I will come presently. You may say I hurt my hand a little, which detained you so long. But" she added "do not say a word of how impatient I have been! Do not expose my want of courage! No! do not stay," continued she, as Anne seemed unwilling to leave her. "I really am quite well, and will come down presently myself." Anne left the room and returned to the drawing-room.

Shortly after, Charlotte entered; looking rather pale and her hand tied up. Mrs. Grey

and the Foleys were there, and expressed a great deal of concern at the accident. She only laughed, and said it was a mere trifle. Her usual colour shortly returned; she seemed in excellent spirits, and was soon amusing the party by her lively account of her own cowardice, and Anne's alarm in seeing it. Anne felt satisfied, and she had time to think once more of herself and—of Edward Temple.

The Foleys left Weston the next day. Anne was glad of the relief of being alone again. Her thoughts, as may be imagined, were deeply occupied in the consideration of the events of the last few days. She felt that her future happiness was dependant upon what had just occurred, and yet, that happiness was perhaps depending on a chance. She had parted from Edward Temple! how could she say that she should ever meet him again, or if she did, that it might be with unchanged feelings?

Love will always doubt and be fearful, even when reason speaks most decidedly against its doubts and fears ; and Anne was not free from the usual failings and weakness of the passion. She, with others, allowed the sway of fear and doubt, to trouble the calm serenity of her love ; but reason and her calmer judgment always reproved her. They told her that her fears of Edward Temple's intentions and constancy were needless ; and, whilst reason held its influence, she trusted in undoubting confidence to his return to claim her for his bride.

Still he was absent : and how could she help feeling melancholy and timid about the future ? She thought that many evils might arise beyond the power of any human being to foresee or avert. It was not necessary to tax Edward Temple with inconstancy to find a reason for never seeing him again—or never seeing him again in happiness. What mortal can ever say

that when we part, in fond, and almost certain anticipation of a happy re-union, that that meeting will ever again take place; or if it should, that it will be in happiness? What need have we to look around for causes of fear! Is there not one ever near us? Is not Death ever beside us—ever ready to set at once its cold chill hand on our fondest, warmest hopes: to say ‘you meet not again—the farewell has been uttered, but the meeting none shall ever witness more.’

Yet Anne had other causes for fear; though they should escape the grasping hand of death; though they should meet again, yet it was not certain how they should meet. In her mother’s solicitude for her speedy marriage, she saw reason for alarm. She was not aware of the motives which actuated her mother’s conduct. If she had, perhaps she might not have hesitated to declare her love for Edward Temple. She

would not then have feared that any other pretensions would have interfered with his claims : for he was rich as Robert Dodson or George Foley. He was still more ! he was fashionable, and distinguished.

But Anne, in the innocence of her heart, never viewed her mother's projects in this light —never thought of her lover as the ' *bon parti* !' She only thought of him as the Edward Temple whom she loved, and who had bestowed his love on her.

Perhaps, could she have entered into the probable effect of her communication on her mother, she might still have been almost equally unwilling, from a different motive, to have confided to her, her feelings and hopes. Edward Temple had not yet decidedly proposed : had she known Mrs. Grey's views on the subject, she would have feared that there would have been such overpowering civility and empressement in

her mother's manner towards him, as delicacy would have shuddered to think of. Should he return when she was once more settled at home, and declare himself openly, it would then be necessary to make the avowal to both her parents, and she must endeavour to obtain their consent to what she almost feared they might not approve.

But the time was not yet come which required the avowal. Alas! was it certain ever to come? and yet why did Anne entertain a doubt? How could she do so consistently with her good opinion of her lover's character? She repelled the idea! Yes! the time must come, if unhappy and unavoidable circumstances did not interpose. But should Edward Temple remain abroad, should George Foley return to England, should either his or Robert Dodson's acceptance again be urged by her father and mother, how could she resist? She had once before felt the misery

of disobliging them, and she could scarcely bear the idea of subjecting herself to their displeasure a second time.

With such thoughts and fears she vainly tried to struggle, as day after day Robert Dodson appeared at Weston ; whilst Edward Temple was still absent, with the certainty of not seeing him again for the space of two months at least.

CHAPTER VI.

AT this time, and for some months past, Anne's thoughts had been more and more engaged on a subject of great and painful interest. She had occasionally observed in Charlotte Daven-try a strangeness of manner : for a while it re-
curred but seldom, and was therefore, at first, soon forgotten ; it was not till it gained strength and certainty by repetition, that Anne allowed herself to think so seriously of it as to believe it a matter for anxiety.

It has been said how much Anne's affection for Charlotte had increased, and that she loved her with all the warmth of her affectionate heart. Any one may imagine the horror of that moment in which a suspicion first flashes across the mind of the existence of mental derangement in those we love ! Any one may imagine the added horror of finding the suspicion gradually gaining ground, and at length assuming the appearance of certainty. Anne Grey experienced this horror when, for the first time, the suspicion forced itself upon her mind with regard to Charlotte Daventry. She would scarcely allow herself to believe it. She combated the idea ; it was too horrible—it could not be ! and for a time she was satisfied.

During a period Charlotte betrayed no symptoms of insanity. She was the same affectionate, cheerful, and intelligent girl as ever. Anne forgot her fears. There had been mo-

ments of strangeness, perhaps a word, a look ; but, why should this dwell on her mind ?

Then came a recurrence, and with it Anne's fears returned ; and again, and again, within the last two months, this strangeness had happened. It had escaped the observation of her family, and Anne tried to believe that it must be her own imagination. She felt that it would be kinder not to mention her suspicions to any one, whilst she herself watched Charlotte with the most painful interest.

William's love for Charlotte still continued a source of annoyance to Anne. Charlotte retained her unconscious manner, and her total ignorance of the nature of his feelings. "She is quite blinded by the sisterly character of her own affection for him," thought Anne.

Yet a little circumstance occurred about this time, which, for a while, created doubts on this subject. One day she went to William's sit-

ting-room in quest of something she wanted. She opened the door rather gently, for she was thinking. Does any one know the difference between the brisk, rattling, noisy way of doing things, when we are not thinking; and the quiet way of performing all such things as moving a chair, poking a fire, opening or shutting a door, when we are busily engaged in thought? Anne Grey was deep in thought when she opened the door of William's room, and she opened it so gently that those within were not aware of her approach. She stood for an instant, then quietly shut the door and withdrew.

But what, or who, had she seen to make her abandon her wish for what she sought? Merely her brother, and her cousin!

The room was a long one, opening at the farthest end into a larger part where the fire was placed; and at this end, standing over the

fire, were her brother William and Charlotte Daventry. The instant Anne saw them, she said to herself, "William has proposed, and been accepted:" she quickly withdrew, and closed the door with even less noise than she had opened it.

She expected, as a matter of course, that when alone with Charlotte, she should have to receive an avowal of the mutual love between William and herself. But no such avowal ensued. Charlotte did not seem disposed to make any disclosure, nor did it appear that she had any to make.

Anne was surprised. Why should Charlotte conceal the truth from her? She could not have been deceived in what she saw. Charlotte and William were standing as lovers together. It was strange then that she should not tell her of William's proposal, and of her acceptance of him; but as no intelligence was likely

to be gained in a direct way, she determined to lead to the subject by talking of William.

The next morning, as they sat alone together, she begun rather abruptly to speak of her brother.

“I wish William would marry,” said she. “Do you think it is likely?” She turned to Charlotte, and examined her countenance as she spoke ; but there was no confusion ; nothing indicative of consciousness : quite the reverse.

“I do not know indeed,” she replied with much more carelessness than Anne, and as if she were scarcely thinking of what she said. “I suppose he will—all men do :” and then after a slight pause, as if arousing herself to attend, she added, “but as to William, I really think that he loves you and me so well that he is in no want of a wife to make him happy ! But, perhaps, the day will come when he will think differently, and I hope it will—he ought to marry.”

This was decisive. Anne saw there must be some mistake: it was evident that Charlotte was ignorant of William's love for her, and still farther from returning the feeling.

But a few more days were to elapse before Anne quitted Weston for her visit to her sister and Lord Stoketon at Alford; but these few days were not suffered to pass without distress once more in the unromantic shape of Mr. Robert Dodson.

Certainly some good kind of stupid people do contrive to cause just as much, and more uneasiness than if they were very clever and intellectual. Robert Dodson had proposed to Anne once. *That*, surely, was making his powers of annoyance sufficiently important! He had been a constant source of alarm and uneasiness to her ever since. Surely this might have been sufficient for any good sort of man! But, no! He put forth greater claims to dis-

tion. He proposed a second time ! only the day before her departure for Alford ; and this time he was prudent ! he spoke not to Anne herself, but to Mrs. Grey for her !

Mrs. Grey gave him very kind encouragement ; she said, she was certain that Anne must be touched with such a proof of constancy, gave him her best wishes, and sent him home with the happy expectation of receiving a favourable reception and a favourable answer from Anne on the morrow.

The morrow came, and Mr. Robert Dodson came with the morrow, but alas ! he came only to be disappointed !

Mrs. Grey met him with the very kindest, and the very longest, face that it was possible to conceive. She was full of affectionate pity, condolences, and hopes. But, she grieved to say it, Anne was obstinate. In short, she would not accept his very obliging offer of presenting her with his name, wealth, and heart.

Still Mrs. Grey advised him not to be distressed, for Anne was sure to change her mind in a little time; she was sure to see her error: Mr. Robert Dodson had only to persevere, and to do him credit, he thought Anne Grey's love was worth perseverance; so he took Mrs. Grey's advice, and rode quietly home to sit quietly musing over the fire at home that evening.

But not so quietly was Anne allowed to enjoy her home fire-side. The Robert Dodson matrimony, and George Foley question, was duly discussed, and Anne was again doomed to a repetition of all the indignation, reproaches, and wonderings of her mother, and the grave looks and serious questions of her father.

She was again and again assured by her mother that she must inevitably be an old maid (whether there was any thing very frightful and alarming in that assurance I cannot

say); she was reminded of her mother's kindness and generosity in saying that if she had accepted George Foley she never would have said a word more about Robert Dodson, and there were many more unanswerable reasons urged over, and over again.

But Anne felt that she had now a reason to give for her refusal, though she hardly knew whether it would be acknowledged as such. However, in a private conference with her father, she ventured to confess her attachment to Edward Temple, and to relate all that had passed between them during his last visit at Weston. She spoke with trembling limbs, burning cheeks, and faltering tongue; but she was fully rewarded for all it had cost her to make the confession, as she saw her father's delighted look, and heard his candid acknowledgment that nothing had ever before given him so much pleasure.

“Well, Anne,” said he, “you need not fear ever to have Robert Dodson’s claims urged again. From what has passed, I should look upon you as engaged to Mr. Temple, and quite unauthorised, had you even a *very* decided inclination,” smiling and patting Anne’s cheek, “to engage yourself to any other person—to your cousin, for instance,” added he. “With Mr. Temple’s consent, Anne, I dare say you might be allowed; but I am sorry to say that without it, it would be quite impossible that I could give you mine.”

Anne smiled, and kissed her father with delight and gratitude, as he playfully watched her blushing face; and then Mr. Grey continued more seriously to speak of Mr. Temple, and to speak of him in the highest terms — to speak with satisfaction at the prospect of having such a son-in-law, to speak with certainty of his intentions. The proposal was only delayed, but he could not

doubt that it would be made when she again saw him. It would be absurd to suppose otherwise. Anne listened with delight to what her father said—to hear his approval—to hear his praises of Edward Temple—to hear him assure her that there could be no cause for doubt, was indeed delightful to her.

“You are a most reasonable girl, Anne,” said Mr. Grey, as he kissed her once more; “but I don’t know what I should have said of you, if you had not been satisfied with one such lover as Edward Temple.”

Anne could laugh, and blush, and be very well pleased to be called reasonable in the way most agreeable to her own feelings.

Mr. Grey reproached himself, in good earnest, for having distressed his good little Anne, but he playfully scolded her for keeping him in ignorance of what had given him so much pleasure.

“If you wish to prove your forgiveness, Anne, you must ask me to Temple-court. I hear it is a beautiful place, and I shall be satisfied with forgiveness in that way.”

Another kiss, and an “Oh, papa!” was her answer, as she half concealed her face by laying it against that of her father.

“Well, then, I may look forward to a visit to Temple-court?” said Mr. Grey, as she shortly after quitted the room with a lightened heart, and prepared for her journey to Alford the next day, with that very comfortable assurance of happiness to come, which in real life, as well as in novels, is the almost certain forerunner of evils!

CHAPTER VII.

ANNE, perhaps, had sufficient present trouble to avert the calamities promised to her by her comfortable, yet dangerous, confidence in happiness to come ; for her carriage neither broke down with her on the road, nor, on her arrival at Alford that night, did she find her sister Sophy, as might have been expected, calling in agony on sister Anne, whilst her blue-beard of a husband was threatening her life or her furniture in one of his customary paroxysms of

rage. Nor, less immediately appalling, did she find Sophy with altered looks and forced gaiety ; Lord Stoketon in gloomy silence ; both starting as the clock struck twelve in a peculiarly deep and solemn manner. Sophy hurrying Anne in breathless speed to her apartment, locking her in, and telling her not to be frightened if she heard sounds during the night. Anne seeing her shudder and pale with haste and fright as she left the room ; then dropping asleep for a few minutes, awake again with the sound of incessant groans and heavy steps pacing backwards and forwards in a room above, below, or on one side of her !

No ! Anne had none of these evils to befall her, but, on her safe arrival, was only met in the hall by her dear sister Sophy, more blooming, pretty and lively than ever, who ran out with eager joy to welcome her to her new home ; and Lord Stoketon, with a face of plea-

sure, watching the meeting and putting in a word when Sophy could give him time, or Anne attend or think of anything but dear Sophy, and her blooming joyous looks.

Oh ! it was a happy moment for Anne ! She forgot all her anxieties, even all her joys ; and love, and Edward Temple was forgotten in the new delight of seeing Sophy once more, and seeing her so happy !

“What do you think of us, Anne?” said Sophy, as they seated themselves in the drawing-room. “Don’t you think that George is looking better than ever he did before?”

“Yes, indeed,” said Anne, “and you too, Sophy. I never saw you both looking so well.”

“And happy as the day is long, dearest Anne !” said Sophy, giving her a kiss that betokened happiness ; and then, looking at her husband and putting her hand on his arm, “I

can assure you, Anne, that he is the very best husband in the world ; I hate praising him to his face, but it is so true that I cannot help it ! And now, George, you must know what I am bound to expect in return !”

“ I suppose I must tell Anne that you are the best wife in the world, and make me happier than ever husband was made before !” said Lord Stoketon, giving her a delighted and affectionate look that told its own story, and vouched for the truth of the words. “ But what will Anne say to us, if she thinks that love-making is begun again ! I am sure, Anne, you thought we had enough of it before, and you hated me with all your heart for taking up Sophy’s time. Now, did not you ? You have never forgiven me, I fear !”

“ If I had not before,” said Anne smiling, whilst her hand lay contentedly in that of her sister, “ I should begin to do so now. Love-

making after marriage is the best way of reconciling me to love-making before."

"Well, then," said Lord Stoketon, looking again at his pretty, blooming wife, "we have plenty of that, have not we, Sophy?"

"Nay, George!" said Sophy. "Do not expose our folly to Anne, already. I intended to have passed myself off for a dignified, demure, married woman: a sort of mixture of lady Bountiful, housekeeper, and good wife. But you have just destroyed my plan, George; a lady Bountiful, or a good wife never allowed any childish love-making in her life."

"Do not fancy you would have succeeded, Sophy," said Anne, "if Lord Stoketon had not told tales of you. You must have hid your face, put on a huge cap, and a great-grandmother's hoop and stiff gown, or some very excellent disguise, or you would never have succeeded."

“Well, then, George shall be saved the scolding I intended for him! But, Anne, you have never admired my house.”

Anne admired it to the full extent of Sophy's and Lord Stoketon's wishes. Alford Abbey was a beautiful place; the house was large, the rooms handsomely furnished, and laying well together, and it had a thoroughly inhabited look. No one ever felt a lurking idea, as they sat in the spacious rooms at Alford, that their size was not quite concomitant with comfort.

The next morning shewed Anne how well the beauty outside the house agreed with the favourable impression of the preceding evening's view of the interior. A handsome conservatory was attached to it. The grounds were very pretty. A flower-garden filled with the gayest flowers, interspersed with vases and statues, spread its beauty before the windows,

extending to a length of shrubby walks and lawns, and forming, from the windows, a foreground to the fine park beyond ; the park adorned with clumps of beech, and oak, on rising hills, or sheltered dingles, whilst the blue hills peeped forth still farther in the view, bounding the horizon with their undulating line. It was a delightful place, and Anne could praise as much as she wished, without any dereliction from truth.

It was such a happy visit to Anne, that the two months flew quickly by. She had told Sophy every thing about herself, and Edward Temple, and George Foley, and Robert Dodson. Everything but what concerned Charlotte and her brother William ; and that, she thought it more advisable to conceal.

She was listened to by Sophy with twice as much interest as she would have been before her marriage. Sophy was certainly improved.

Happiness—the devotion of her husband, and her love for him, had certainly improved and softened her. We may talk of the softener of adversity, but domestic happiness is still more efficacious.

As Anne saw the improvement, she discovered that Sophy had perhaps needed it. She never would have thought of it before, or rather, she would never have allowed it till the improvement had actually taken place.

Sophy listened with attention to Anne's relation about Edward Temple. She thought that nothing would be so charming as her marrying him, and was perfectly convinced that he would come to Weston, and make a decided proposal, the moment she returned. She was certain it would all end well, and as a proof, she reminded Anne how well her own affair had ended with Lord Stoketon.

Sophy's powers of reasoning might not be very good, or her reason a very wise one, but she was not the less comforting on that account. She went so far as to advise her to persuade her father to have the marriage in town, instead of at Weston: no wonder that Anne laughed, and smiled, and blushed, and felt a great deal of delight in Sophy's society: no wonder that she should feel a great deal of regret in leaving her, as the last weeks, the last days, the last minutes, and at length the last seconds, flew away and were gone, which remained to her of the visit to Alford.

She quitted it thinking of the mutual happiness of Sophy and her husband; inclined to look with a favourable view on the advantages of married life, and to wonder whether Temple-court were at all like Alford Abbey. and whether Edward Temple might, or might

not, make as good a husband as Lord Stoke-ton.

As Anne had William for a companion she had less time for these reflections. He had come to Alford to take her back, and had been a week with them there. She had much to say and to hear, and a journey alone with him gave her opportunities of talking and listening which were not to be found at Alford, when she was enjoying to the full, the last moments of Sophy's society.

During Anne's absence a cause for distress had occurred in the family, of which her mother and Charlotte had given some account, and of which she now received farther particulars from William.

This was the death of Charlotte's maid, who after a very short illness had expired in the house. She was a foreigner and a Catholic—consequently not a favourite with the other ser-

vants: but she had lived with Charlotte for many years; almost from a child, and was much attached to her mistress.

Charlotte felt her death severely, and its suddenness encreased the shock to her feelings. She felt her loss more deeply perhaps than she might otherwise have done; for she was the last link which remained to her of her father's home—the only being whom she had known in childhood, and who had recollections in common with herself, of her father and her home.

But there was besides an added circumstance which encreased her distress. The poor woman had eagerly desired that a Catholic priest should be sent for. Her wish was readily and most willingly complied with. Charlotte, in her anxiety, had herself given the orders to the servant. Unluckily she or the servant made some mistake in these orders,

and the message never reached the priest till too late. He came, but all was over, and the poor woman had died without the consolation she so ardently desired.

Charlotte bitterly blamed herself for having caused the delay ; and it was time alone which could restore her spirits.

William had much to say upon this subject ; his thoughts were evidently full of Charlotte ; and, in the long day's journey with Anne, the forced tête à tête was so tempting to confidence, that William found it almost irresistible, and nearly confessed his love. Very nearly, but not quite ! A sudden jolt in the carriage—changing horses—or a drunken post-boy—something checked him, and Anne expected in vain.

He had begun—he had dropped a few expressions—something which she interpreted as implying his love, and a consciousness of its

being returned ; but then he stopped — his intention was changed, and he either relapsed into silence, spoke on indifferent matters, or returned to the subject of Sophy and her happiness.

Anne expected, on her return, to hear an avowal from Charlotte ; but none was made. Anne saw with sorrow that she looked ill, and that her spirits seemed depressed. When alone with her, she spoke with emotion of the death of her maid, with a feeling that in losing her she had lost the last tie that bound her to her happy childhood — to her father's memory. Anne saw it was that tie which affected her so strongly. When we have once known real affliction, the mind becomes sensitive to the touch of every minor sorrow. Widows and orphans have tears to shed, where the happy can see but little cause for grief. The rain-drop, touching the colourless pebble brings

forth the form and colours which had lain hidden in the sunshine : even so, a trifling sorrow recalls the memory of grief lying dormant, but not extinct, in the heart : it bids the forms and images of affliction rise again in all their fresh reality. Had Charlotte Daventry never experienced grief she perhaps would have been less deeply affected at present : but Anne saw that the feelings of *the orphan* had been touched and revived.

Anne was formed to bestow comfort. She could rejoice with those who rejoiced — no smile so bright—no sympathy so true as hers ; but she could weep with those who wept : none knew so well how to soothe.

No wonder then, that after her return to Weston, when all her fondest care and attention were bestowed in affording comfort to Charlotte Daventry, Charlotte should rapidly recover her spirits, and become ere long gay

and animated as ever. It was a pleasant sight to Anne to see her returning to her former cheerful looks, and a pleasant sound to hear her lively, laughing voice once more.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE families at Weston and at Chatterton often met, and Isabella Foley and Anne Grey at length became friends.

It has been said that we are apt to hate those whom we have injured. With the unamiable this is true, but with the amiable to injure is to love. Such was the case with Isabella : she felt that she had been unjust to Anne, and by way of reparation she began to love her with all her heart. Anne was not a person coldly to

receive such a gift, and she loved Isabella in return.

Whether people choose to love or hate one another in a country neighbourhood, or at a watering place, it is equally sure to call forth remark, and to give rise to a whole army of ideas, and whispers, and conjectures, and certainties. We shall see that Miss Foley and Miss Grey could not be friends with impunity.

“ Ah! my dear,” said Lady Dowton to Anne, one morning; “ it is quite charming to see you with that sweet girl, Isabella Foley. Quite like sisters! nothing can be so fortunate! She is a very nice girl, and I am so delighted to see it so. Quite like *sisters*! that is a pretty little blush, my dear Anne! and when does he come home?”

“ Who?” said Anne, with an innocent tone of enquiry.

“ Ah! very well. I see you *must* not under-

stand ; but when does Mr. George Foley come home ?”

“ I don’t know,” said Anne, really blushing a little.

“ Oh ! you are discreet, I see !” said Lady Dowton : “ well, it is all very pretty, and very proper ; but, my dear love, I am so tired ! I am almost afraid that I never can support the fatigue of this visit to the Dashwoods’. I have been sadly suffering this morning ; sadly indeed ! and so he is not coming back at present ? Well I had hoped—but I must not talk.”

Anne looked uncommuncative : Lady Dowton saw it, and became so tired and languid that Anne thought it time to take leave.

Upon her departure, Lady Dowton sat down to write to her dear friend Miss Lightfoot, and to inform her that Anne Grey’s marriage to George Foley was to be delayed still longer : probably to an indefinite period, owing to Mr.

Foley's objection to his son's marrying so early ; that it was a profound secret, and that George Foley remained abroad on this account.

The next day's post conveyed this very correct and interesting intelligence to Miss Lightfoot, and the next day it was communicated more agreeably perhaps, *viva voce*, to Mrs. and Miss Dashwoods by Lady Dowton herself.

Robert Dodson, indefatigable man, still continued his visits to Weston. Twice refused, and still persevering ! Ye bashful, despairing swains, take courage from the example of Mr. Robert Dodson ! persevere as he did, and perhaps—nay no doubt—you will be rewarded as he was. If the lady of your affections has a sister, a cousin, or a friend : lively, good humoured, and unmarried—do not despair ! Persevere ! and, with Robert Dodson, you will be rewarded at last by finding that your love is transferred from one object to another

Yes! Robert Dodson had slipped, slided, or stumbled out of love with Anne Grey, and into love with Charlotte Daventry. Charlotte had been so kind to him—had pitied him so much—was always so good-humoured (so was Anne, but not so lively in her good-humour) that Robert Dodson found it the easiest thing in the world to be in love with her.

Whether either Anne or Charlotte were aware of it, it was impossible to say. Mrs. Grey certainly was not: William Grey certainly was: but then had Robert Dodson not been in love with Charlotte, William would have been just as certain that he was, for he thought every one must be in love with her: but he said nothing, and for a time, at least, Robert Dodson's transferred affection remained a secret at Weston. It was neither whispered nor uttered, nor were its accents caught as they fell, unless Robert Dodson's impressive "Good morning, Miss

Daventry. *I hope* I shall see you again before long," as he quitted the room at Weston each day, or each alternate day, might be taken as an indication.

"Lovers' hearts, what pretty things!" said Charlotte Daventry to herself one morning, as she sat alone in the small sitting-room at Weston. Mrs. Grey and Anne were out; Mr. Grey at a parish meeting, or something equally delightful; and Charlotte Daventry was left alone.

"Pretty baubles," said Charlotte Daventry, smiling to herself, "to be played with—trifled with—sought—won—and thrown aside!" She paused. "Yes, these gay balls," playfully holding up some balls of coloured worsteds which lay by her; "yes, these shall be my lovers' hearts—appropriate emblems!" smiling as she looked at them: "soft, warm—there the comparison holds! and here this fiery red one! this shall personify the flaming, fiery lover: this is

Frank Crawford. Here this purple ; this, the more sober, more controllable, yet ardent lover ! my good cousin ! my *almost brother* ”— she laughed, “ my very dear cousin, William Grey. And here, this dull, unlively brown ! what can this be but my honest, stupid lover, Robert Dodson ! And this bright blue—” she sighed— “ yes ! this bright blue—emblem of constancy ! would I could say that this was claimed—that this was an emblem of *his* love ! But no—rather let it be an emblem of mine ! ”—She paused and sighed ; the tear was in her eye : but it was but for a moment, and, starting from her reverie, she smiled once more. “ What ! my lovers’ hearts, dangling forgotten ! here whilst they hang at the bar, waiting for a decision ! Here, Frank Crawford, what is your plea ? A ready wit—a cunning heart—a handsome face—a deceiving tongue, that utters bitter things, and merry things, and wise things : a fund of

knowledge, sense and talent—all alas! a little mis-applied! a love of self, pride, strong passions, ardent love. And this! Is this all, Mr. Crawford? All you have to say? Come, my pretty, brilliant ball! speak once more: or shall I tell you what to say? shall I speak for you? You will have a title, fortune, influence, and a name. *These* are your claims; and I, your judge, will not slight them. No! they shall be attended to. And you, more sober lover! what are your claims? Shall I speak for you, and tell you what you have? You have a fortune—a devoted heart, but that is nothing, and,—you are a *cousin*! *These* are your claims, and I—I will not say they shall not be attended to! And you, good, dull, and heavy brown, what say you? Not a word? No, nothing. But I will speak one word for you in pity! You are *rich*! riches may be useful: even your claims shall not be entirely despised. You shall be

played with and amused—No more! He comes !
Lie still, these smiles—lie still, my pretty hearts,”
and William Grey entered the room and found
Charlotte Daventry apparently busily engaged
with her worsted work.

CHAPTER IX.

SOPHY Stoketon was not a true prophetess! Edward Temple did not come and propose to Anne as soon as she returned to Weston.

Anne might, and did feel both disappointment and uneasiness, and yet she could hardly allow herself to acknowledge that she felt either; she knew that circumstances alone could keep him away. She could not doubt his constancy! A woman where she truly loves confides implicitly in the object of her love;

and there is a beauty in the undoubting, unsuspecting purity of her affection ; a beauty that we would not wish away, even though it exists only to be trampled on, and betrayed.

Anne Grey thus loved ! and she would not doubt ! but timidity bade her fear, and she anxiously watched each day for tidings of her lover. She anxiously expected the arrival of a letter, to announce his coming ; but, alas ! none appeared ! and when Sophy and her husband arrived at Weston, about a month after Anne had quitted Alford, she had neither seen nor heard anything about him.

Yes ! I forgot—she had indeed seen one thing. She had seen his name in the paper ! Amongst the list of distinguished visitors staying at the Duke of ——'s, enumerated in the Morning Post, and Court Journal, stood one name—one name that she had a strange facility of descrying amongst a hundred others.

“What a pretty blush, my dear Anne!” said Charlotte Daventry to her, after watching her a few minutes in her agreeable task of reading the newspaper. “That pretty blush announces something. I suppose he is dead or married? No—not quite unhappy enough for that; but still not quite pleased! ‘A proposed matrimonial alliance between the daughter of a noble Earl, and the wealthy and fashionable Mr. Temple!’ What not that, Anne?” as Anne blushed still more deeply, and shook her head. “Well, what is it?” said Charlotte, getting up and looking over her shoulder.

Anne laughed, tried to push Charlotte playfully away, and put her hand over the tell-tale paragraph.

“Ah! thank you, Anne, dear! you have just shewn me the place, and now”—taking hold of her hand, and peeping under it, “let me see what it is! Ah, ha! exactly,” said she,

with playful exultation, giving Anne a kiss.

“ Exactly as I thought ! ” ‘ Mr. Temple ! ’
‘ Distinguished party of fashionables ! ’ Well
I hope he enjoys his distinguished party of
fashionables, and I hope he will come soon,
and try what a distinguished party of *un-*
fashionables will say to him ! “ Ah ! Anne !
never think to deceive me ! ” said Charlotte, half
seriously, “ I read *Edward Temple* in that face
as plain as I could read anything. But, Anne,
why did you look so grave ? Why did the
sight of his name in that paper make you feel
sad ? Do not deny that this is a weakness,
Anne ! Why should he not be gay ? why should
he not enter into society, and enjoy society—be
agreeable and lively as ever ? If he believes
that you love him, this should only add to his
power of enjoyment. You perhaps feel differ-
ently. You feel that *you* could not enjoy
anything so much when he is absent. But,

Anne, you must remember that this is a woman's feeling. Men do not resemble us in the steadiness—the absorbing nature of our love. Love is merely a plaything to them! it is put off and on, and does not affect their whole thoughts and feelings and conduct and happiness, as it does with us. We cannot smile and be gay, and seek admiration whilst we are doubtful of the affections of those we love: whilst we are in ignorance whether they are in health and happiness—whether they are not suffering in mind and body; suffering perhaps from doubts of our constancy! But, Anne, it is different with men. It is no proof that Mr. Temple is not attached to you because he can be entering into gaiety; whilst he is uncertain of your constancy, your health, happiness, existence even, (for he may not be quite sure of that certainly)—of which he might assure himself immediately by coming to see you! But this is no proof that he

does not love you, Anne, as much as ever! No proof that he will not come in due course of time and make his proposals—just as he should do,” said she, playfully turning to her. “Nay, Anne, grave still! Still graver than when I first saw you pondering and blushing over that name. Foolish child!”

“Yes, it is foolish, Charlotte,” said Anne, “but I cannot help it:” and she turned away her head to hide the tears that filled her eyes.

Charlotte perceived it, and said, with a softened kindness in her voice and manner, “My poor Anne! I did not expect this!” and Anne turned towards her again, and made an effort to overcome the weakness of which she was ashamed.

“It is foolish indeed, Charlotte,” said she trying to smile: “but it is over now. There, you see, I can smile,” as she wiped her tears away. “And now I will say one word, Char-

lotte, whilst we are on the subject, and then, no more to-day—no more till — Well, never mind that !” she said, slightly smiling. “ But, Charlotte, I must do him the justice to say that, whatever a momentary weakness may cause me to feel, or *look* (as you read my looks), I have not in my heart the least doubt of Mr. Temple’s constancy and affection for me. I feel certain that he will return to make me the offer of his hand, whenever circumstances will allow him to do so. If I were not—if I believed that he had forgotten to love me, or had never really loved me, his character would be very different to that I imagine it to be—very different to that which I love and esteem. I should feel that I had been mistaken in loving him, and that he was unworthy of my affection. But I do not imagine such a thing ! I cannot ! I think too highly of him, not to trust implicitly in his constancy and affection. Now

Charlotte, I have told you what I really think on the subject; so do not watch my looks again. They are nothing! They are, it seems, very silly things! But I believe," she added, smiling, "that love, even a woman's love, Charlotte, is never very wise. There is always a touch of folly about it."

"Well, Anne, your love," said Charlotte, affectionately, "I think is as free from folly as most women's, and I admire your sentiments with regard to Mr. Temple: and now I will not say a word more, for I see that you had rather that I should not: and here is 'mama Grey!' 'Mama!'—Ah! Anne! If you knew the feeling those words convey to me, when I say them in fun, and feel *not in fun*, that they are not real!—that they do not belong to me—that I have no one to call Mama! No mother, no father, no brother, no sister! Yes, Anne, I can envy you! even if *he* deserts and deceives you!

Even then, Anne, I could envy you!" and her voice faltered with emotion as she spoke.

"Dearest Charlotte!" said Anne with emotion, laying her hand on hers. And now Mrs. Grey was within speaking distance of the cousins, and no more was said either by Anne or Charlotte. They both tried to rouse themselves, and to throw off the feeling of melancholy which had been unconsciously called forth by their conversation.

Sophy and Lord Stoketon came to Weston. Henry was at home, and the whole family were once more collected together. It was a happy re-union. Still it was not perfect happiness! Where, indeed, is this to be found on earth?

If we could look into the hearts of every apparently happy circle of smiling faces, we should, perhaps, be surprised to find in all some secret grief! To find that, beneath the smiling

exterior, there lay concealed in all some sorrows, or cares, which mingled with their happiness and prevented it from being, what to the superficial observer it appeared, what it never is on earth—perfect ! There are smiling faces, and beaming looks, and glad-toned voices ; and there is indeed much of happiness, but it cannot be perfect !

In looking into the hearts of the members of one family, now assembled round the winter's hearth, or now watching the summer sunset, another cause for wonder strikes us. We believe that, having unveiled the secrets of one, we need look no farther : that the heart of each will probably be alike. But, no ! we look again ! Different woes and cares dwell in each ! Even in one small family circle each member, so apparently alike, is yet so different ! Though the same griefs are affecting all, they are felt differently, they touch on different chords. The

human heart, we say, and we know, is the same. If we read of sentiments, joys or woes described, we own alike their truth. They are *our* feelings, joys or woes : yet, amongst the multitude of hearts that are beating in the world—that are throbbing with pain, or fluttering with joy, there are not, perhaps, two that are beating alike—whose joys and woes affect them in the same manner. The variations are numberless. Perhaps no two, at any given moment, will beat in every respect to the same emotions : there are likenesses ! but this is all ! there are always some slight exceptions—some differences ! Even with sisters, of almost the same age, where circumstances, education, and situation are alike to each ; yet, look into the hearts of both, and even there we shall see that, however great the similitude of face, manner, and tone, yet in that busy world of feeling lie things unknown and strange to each ; and this, perhaps,

without either perceiving that they have a thought or feeling in variance. Yet, so it is! and no less true is it that there ever lurks in human nature some secret woe, some secret alloy. We never can be perfectly happy, though, in those hours of domestic peace, in those family re-unions, in those quiet homes of England, we may more nearly approach the perfection of earthly bliss than elsewhere. Yet, even here earth has its sway. Earth breathes on the hearts of all with her cold chill breath, and the summer flowers of joy that would here have gladly bloomed, are touched and withered ; their beauty is impaired even in those calm and peaceful English homes.

Must then, the family circle, now again united at Weston, form an exception to this general rule ? Oh, no ! Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and their family, were by far too common-place to be different to the rest of the world. Even at

Weston there was no perfect happiness. All, perhaps, had cares and troubles of their own. Anne Grey was not exempt. The continued absence of Edward Temple was no slight cause of uneasiness to her ; and her avowal of perfect confidence in his constancy was fully put to the test, as week after week, he remained absent and she heard no tidings of him but those the papers brought, where his name was seen amongst the lists of the gay and the fashionable assembled together, ‘to partake,’ as they said, ‘of the hospitalities of some noble duke,’ ‘distinguished marquis,’ or ‘hospitable earl !’ This, at least, seemed to prove that he was well and happy. She would scarcely allow herself to fancy many evils, or to fear more than once or twice in every day that she would never see him again !

Anne Grey was sensible and calm, but still she could not but feel the absence of her lover

for so long a time ! He who had left her with the avowal of love but half uttered, with her consent but half accorded. He who had quitted her with the anxiety for meeting again, the pain at parting so visibly expressed in his countenance and manner. He who had asked her to allow him to hope, to allow him to explain when next they met ? Could he willingly remain in uncertainty for the sake of enjoying the society of strangers, mere acquaintances, perhaps ? What lover would so linger ? What lover would not fly to obtain an assurance so dear to his wishes, to explain what want of time and opportunity before had left unexplained, and unexpressed within his heart ? Oh, no ! It could not be ! There was some cause to keep him away—something to which he unwillingly and impatiently submitted—he must—he would come ! the moment he was at liberty to do so. Anne would not allow herself

to doubt : his absence should only cast a slight shade upon her happiness. So she wished ! so she resolved ! Yet the shade was there, and who can say that whilst it lingered it should not darken into a deeper gloom ?

William's love for Charlotte continued, and so did Charlotte's unconscious encouragement. Anne sighed over it, but 'it could not be helped !' words on the value of which we have elsewhere remarked.

Another cause of uneasiness which existed for Anne will require a little explanation. It will be asked, was Sophy Stoketon's vanity, her selfishness, her love of gaiety, extinct ? Did Sophy Stoketon retain no resemblance to Sophy Grey ? When Anne saw her at Alford in the quiet of home, loving and beloved by her husband, she thought that any little faults she had ever possessed had been renounced at the altar where she had sworn to love, honour, and

obey; or, if they still existed, it was in such an amiable form as scarcely to be reprehensible. Her vanity, if there at all, was only because her husband liked to see her admired; she liked society because George liked it, and appeared in it to such advantage. He was such a general favourite! and it was delightful going out with him, as she saw that he enjoyed it!

This Anne saw at Alford; but at Weston a little soupçon of Sophy's less permissible vanity and selfishness threw an additional shade over the happiness of the family re-union. She observed symptoms of uneasiness in Lord Stoketon, slight certainly, but still they existed, as Sophy displayed her love of gaiety, her fondness for admiration. 'To what will this lead in time?' 'Will it lead to domestic happiness and contentment?' were questions quite involuntary, and which Lord Stoketon scarcely allowed

himself to ask ; but yet they were sometimes asked, and were never satisfactorily answered. Anne asked herself the same questions. She had more time to reply, but she *hoped* instead of replying ! There was yet another and a deeper cause of uneasiness to mar the happiness of that happy month of domestic re-union. This was the renewed doubt about Charlotte Daventry. Insanity—mental derangement—madness ! these were words which at times rang in Anne's ears, which seemed to haunt her. She could not shake them off—she could not dispel them ! but she strove once more to hope.

Hope ! blessed boon ! gracious gift to the meek and humble mind, to the sad and sinking spirit. Hope whispers, and the sinking heart is glad once more, the sad and tearful eyes again are raised with bright intelligence. Hope whispers ! But is that whisper of earth ? Is that bright beam of earth or heaven ? Oh ! if

of earth how vain and fleeting : why do we listen to its words ? Who that has read these beautiful lines of Bishop Heber's has not felt a wish in his heart that the hope which whispers to himself may be of heaven and not of earth !

Reflected on the Lake, I love
To mark the star of evening glow.
So tranquil in the Heaven above,
So restless in the wave below.

Thus, Heavenly hope is all serene,
But earthly hope, how bright soe'er,
Still fluctuates o'er this changing scene,
As false and fleeting as 'tis fair.

HEBER.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Lord and Lady Stoketon returned to Alford, they took Charlotte Daventry with them. After the happiness of a month passed in their society it was melancholy for Anne to be left without either them or her usual companion, Charlotte. However, Henry, her dear boy Henry was at home ; moreover she thought that Edward Temple would not always be amongst distinguished parties at dukes' houses, and that he might at last come to seek the

heart-felt welcome of a simple, yet affectionate being at Weston. This was only expectation ! and, after all, expectation is a poor thing to make oneself happy upon : it was lucky Anne had something better to drive away the sadness of a separation. She had Henry's animated face, his boyish glee, and comfortable chats to cheer her.

She loved Henry with all her heart : she loved him as he loved her, and that was in no trifling, careless way. He was devotedly fond of Anne, and he thought her perfection. She was his own darling Anne, to whom he told every secret, and who was always ready to listen to him, and to feel for him, and who had, as he said, "such right notions," and "was always so sensible !" Sometimes he thought for a moment that she was wrong—for a day, or a month perhaps, when her opinion went against his wishes ; but it always ended in his finding she was right.

One day when he and Anne were sitting alone together, Henry put on a very grave face, "Anne, I have something to tell you," said he very seriously. "Something I want to talk to you about." Anne was almost frightened; she expected to hear that he had got into some difficulty, in which he required her assistance; but she was soon relieved as he proceeded very gravely; "You know, Anne, that I have often talked to you about your marrying, but I always said that I could not find any one good enough for you. However, at last I have found a person who I think is exactly suited to you. He would be just good enough, and would make you really happy, and I meant to tell you as soon as they were all gone out of the house, and you had time to think about it, that you may consider whether it would not do very well."

Anne smiled and was going to say something rather in jest, but Henry looked grave; she

saw she must be serious ; so she tried to compose her features and listened.

“ You know, Anne, I have been always looking out for a husband for you : and at last I have found the very person I wanted. I have not seen him myself ; but I am told that he is a very fine, handsome-looking fellow : moreover I asked particularly, because I know what you think about that, whether he was very quiet and gentlemanlike in his manners and appearance, and he is remarkably so : and very clever, agreeable and rich. But after all that is not the thing. I know better of him than all this : I know a really good trait of him : I know that he is one of the finest, most generous, noble-hearted fellows in all England.”

Henry's face glowed with the enthusiasm of his admiration as he spoke. Anne was pleased with the sentiment, and touched by it ; but still she had some difficulty to refrain from smiling.

However Henry did not perceive it, but went on, whilst Anne was still left in ignorance of the name of his hero—her future husband.

He went on, and with an animated countenance related some circumstances respecting a steward, and a poor man—a farmer on the estate, who might have been ruined by the roguery of this steward, had not Anne's destined husband interfered, and by his active exertions, his generous interference (and all against his own interest), saved the poor man. He had done it all in such a noble, yet sensible and judicious, way. The whole school had rung with his praises. Henry had listened, he said—had asked “Is he married?” and received a satisfactory reply—“No! he was unmarried:” and then he settled at once to himself, “This is the very person for Anne.” It was not a single instance of his generosity and good sense; some of the boys at his school lived near his place,

and heard him praised, and knew that he was so much beloved and respected.

Henry stopped, and then, looking at Anne, when he had related all these circumstances, said to her, "Well, Anne, is not he a fine fellow?"

"Yes, indeed," said Anne, "he seems to be a very perfect character;" and she was in truth only saying what she thought.

"Aye, Anne, I knew you would say so?"

"And now, Henry, I want to know his name?"

"Oh! his name! yes, I forgot—but Anne, do not you think it will do? He comes into this neighbourhood I hear, sometimes, so you will be able to see him. Perhaps you *have* seen him by the way? His name is Temple—Edward Temple, of Temple-court."

"Mr. Temple!" said Anne, starting, and turning away her face to conceal the pleasure

which she guessed was too evidently painted there. It was so singular, so delightful to have heard such a trait, such praises of him—to discover, when she only expected to be amused by Henry's boyish scheme, that the hero of his imagination was the very person whom she loved.

She tried to compose her features to a proper degree of pleasure, and then said "I know Mr. Temple, Henry!"

"You know him!" said Henry, with a joyful look. "You know him! Well, and Anne?" in a tone of animated enquiry, expecting Anne to tell him that she should be delighted to marry him.

"Well, Henry," said Anne, blushing and looking down to conceal her blush. "I think you have done him justice: that is, I think—I should think he was equal to the opinion you have formed of him."

“ You should think ! you think ! but Anne, are you not sure ? ” said Henry, eagerly taking hold of her hand, and looking her full in the face. Anne could not stand the enquiring scrutiny of this look, for she knew that there was a certain consciousness depicted in her face ; she determined to attempt no farther concealment, and she made Henry—her own dear boy Henry quite happy—quite in dancing delight, with telling him that she loved Edward Temple, and that she believed Edward Temple loved her. She ended by begging him to be discreet.

“ Discreet ! Aye, Anne,” said Henry, proudly. “ When did you ever know me fail in discretion ? I am to be trusted, Anne. You may tell me every secret of your heart, and you need not fear that I shall blab ; ” and Henry then returned to his delight, his surprise, and his wonder when Mr. Temple would come ; and why he did not come ; and to ask Anne

over and over again for a description of him — his looks — his conversation — whether he rode well — whether he had ever called her ‘Anne’ by mistake, instead of ‘Miss Grey?’ and Henry looked a little disappointed, and doubtful for a moment, when he found he never had. But it did not matter! It was certain he was a fine fellow, and very fond of Anne, and that she was very tolerably fond of him, and how he should like him for a brother! Henry had also more serious feelings to express. There was mingled so much right-mindedness and goodness of heart with his boyish view of things, that Anne was delighted with him.

His impatience was the only thing with which she had to find fault. His excessive impatience for Edward Temple’s proposal made Anne find that her own impatience could not be kept in such steady discipline, whilst she had to curb that of Henry; nor to help being

vexed that he did not come, when she heard Henry's wonder and vexation expressed most ardently every day. Still, it was very agreeable to have to talk to him on the subject, and the three weeks of Charlotte Daventry's absence passed less slowly than they would otherwise have done.

Charlotte returned ; and how had the time passed with her ? Of course just as all time spent from home sounds in relation, when it becomes a thing of the past.

“ Oh it had been so happy ! ” was Charlotte's answer. “ If you had only been there, Anne ! I wanted you every day. We had a great deal of gaiety and visiting.”

“ And Sophy ? ” —

“ She is so well and in such spirits—and she is so much admired,” added Charlotte, in rather a different tone, but it was soon exchanged again for one more animated. “ She is the

reigning belle of the county, and receives her homage very prettily."

"And Lord Stoketon?"—

"Oh, Lord Stoketon, he is so much beloved—Yes, that is the word for him. Every one loves him. How happy Sophy ought to be!"

"Yes, she is happy indeed!" said Anne with some little emotion and a sigh.

"She is very fond of gaiety," said Charlotte. Anne looked enquiringly at her, but there was nothing in her manner that betokened any peculiar meaning. Anne was satisfied.

CHAPTER XI.

MAN is notoriously a social animal: as if to prove it, we spend the greater part of our lives in seeing one another, hating one another, and envying one another. If this is not the proof, it is at least the consequence of our sociability.

There was a great deal of visiting, receiving of visitors, and what is politely styled gaiety, going on whilst Charlotte remained with the Stoketons. Sophy Stoketon, with the rest of the world, enjoyed gaiety (commonly so called) with

all her heart. She enjoyed and sought it perhaps a little too much; for it was more than her husband wished.

But then, as Charlotte Davenport said to her as they sat working together in the morning, "My dear Sophy, you are so pretty and so nice, and Lord Stoketon loves so much to see you admired, that you ought not to be shut up at home with no one but 'Mrs. Gibson, ma'am?' or 'Mr. Larkin, *me* Lady to see you;'" and Charlotte gave an admirable imitation of the said Mrs. Gibson and Mr. Larkin, which made Sophy laugh.

"If you had not been such a good mimic, I would not have agreed with you," said she. "Will you do it once more: or keep it for George this evening?"

"With all my heart, if he will not wish to give you a full dose of Mrs. Gibson *proper*. If he will be satisfied with Mrs. Gibson *sham*, I

will do anything in the world for him. But seriously Sophy, I could not like him if he were the sort of husband to keep you always at home. A domestic-felicity man, who never enjoyed any domestic felicity in his life! or if he did, singly, for I am sure he never would allow any one else to enjoy it!"

Sophy laughed and Sophy sighed.

"George likes me to go into society," she said in a gentle voice.

"Yes," said Charlotte, "Oh yes!" after a little pause as if she remembered that her *yes* had not been sufficiently assenting. "Oh yes, Sophy."

"By the bye," she added in a different tone, and after a few minutes, pause, "how odd it was when you spoke of Captain Herbert before you married, that you never told me that he was good-looking."

"Good-looking! did not I?" said Sophy, "But I am not sure now?"

“ Oh ! Sophy ! ” interposed Charlotte. “ He is one of the handsomest people I ever saw : but then I have an interest in him, poor man.”

“ Poor man ? ” said Sophy, “ and why poor man ? ”

“ For shame, Sophy ! how cruel to ask ;— but I forgot ! you probably do not see what I cannot help perceiving. With all his gaiety and assumed carelessness, is there not a sigh for a lady he once loved ? Is there not a hidden pang for a lady he once loved and *lost* ? For a lady who laughs and *forgets* ? Sophy, what do you say to that ? ” said Charlotte, half seriously, half jestingly, turning her eyes full on Sophy with a look of enquiry.

“ My dear Charlotte,” said Sophy, averting her face, but just laughing a little, “ how can you fancy anything so absurd ? ”

“ Absurd ! ” said Charlotte. “ Well I suppose it is right for you to think so. ‘ They laugh

who win !' but, you must allow me to think for myself. *I* may be sorry ; *I must* indeed, when I look at my Lady Stoketon here !" turning and playfully fixing her eyes upon Sophy. " Let me look ! Is this a form to be forgotten ? Is this a face to be looked at with impunity ? to be loved once and then — nay, nay my dear Lady Stoketon, do not veil your beauties from my sight—do not hide the idol from its worshipper, before your graces are half told !" Charlotte laughingly continued, as Sophy interrupted her by placing her hands before her eyes. " I should have raised you to the skies if you had not closed my vision at once, Sophy, you tyrant. But as you will not let me finish apostrophising, we will leave it to Captain Herbert to do the rest ; and he will do it from his heart ! and you—One thing however, Sophy," said Charlotte, dropping her mock heroic tone, and speaking seriously, almost

with emotion—"You are perfect. You have not an atom of vanity, or you would be flattered by having inspired such a sentiment in the heart of a man like Captain Herbert!"

Sophy did not speak : there was a moment's silence, and then Charlotte, with a lively air, as if she had forgotten the subject on which they had been talking, or wished to have no more of it, walked away, and, opening the window which led into the garden, was soon amongst the flowers, leaving Sophy to reflect alone.

Whether her reflections were pleasing or not I cannot say. Whether they called forth a smile, or a sigh? but Charlotte Daventry, as she stooped over a cluster of blooming flowers, had a smile of triumph in her eyes.

"My lady bright!" fell softly from her lips. "As lovely and as frail as these. Your

fates are alike! But a light wind blows, you are bowed to the earth, and your sweetness and beauty are then but a dream. Frail flower! frail lady! Flutter and dance alike in the breeze, and the sun, and the summer air! Gay flowers! gay lady, bloom awhile!"

"How pretty my cousin, Lady Stoketon is!" said Charlotte Daventry to Captain Herbert, as she was dancing with him at a race ball. "Certainly she is very lovely!" exclaimed she, as she looked towards the place where Sophy was sitting. "But I suppose," he added, laughing, "it is against etiquette to praise one's cousin."

"Oh no! I think not," said Captain Herbert. "Or, at any rate, Miss Daventry may do what she pleases; only you must allow me to say in return, How lovely Lady Stoketon's cousin is," slightly bowing to her with an air as much as to say, You ought to be

flattered at receiving even such a compliment from me.

“ You have not yet found out that I hate compliments,” said Charlotte, laughing, “ and you have not yet answered my question, or rather my remark. I said, How lovely Lady Stoketon is !”

“ How shall I excuse myself,” said Captain Herbert carelessly, “ both for paying a compliment, and not paying one? But I forgot. Lady Stoketon is very pretty ;” and Captain Herbert said so as if he thought that even this was the praise which civility demanded.

“ I thought you had been a great friend, consequently a great admirer, of my cousin ?” said Charlotte, enquiringly, and with a little surprise. “ Sophy so often speaks of you !”

Captain Herbert gave a little start ; what man would not have been flattered ?

“ I am flattered !” said he, but he said so, as if he wished to imply that he did not care whether Lady Stoketon, beautiful, captivating, and agreeable as she was, thought or spoke about him or not. “ I am flattered,” said he, and he glanced at himself in a mirror, probably for the pleasure of convincing himself that it was easier for the attention of a man like him to flatter, than to be flattered by the thoughts or admiration of any man or woman in the world.

“ She said the other day she thought you had forgotten her,” said Charlotte, “and that you must have mistaken her for some other person.”

“ Did she ?” said Captain Herbert, whilst a smile curled on his lip that seemed to betoken that he was not quite indifferent to the interest felt for him by a very pretty woman. “ I am quite shocked—quite grieved ! I must

have been unpardonably rude, I am afraid," and his eye glanced towards the place where Sophy was sitting, smiling, laughing, and talking to a circle of men surrounding her, who were too idle, or too well occupied, to dance. Charlotte saw his glance."

"Do look at my cousin now," said she, "how very pretty she looks at this moment!"

"She is very lovely!" said Captain Herbert.

"She is such a dear creature!" continued Charlotte, who seemed fully bent on praising her cousin that evening. "How young she looks to be a chaperon!"

"She is very young and very beautiful," said Captain Herbert, and he sighed.

"And it is that which makes you speak so gravely, I suppose?" said Charlotte, laughing. "Are you envious of her gaiety, beauty, or happiness, Captain Herbert?"

“Of all three, if they take away so much of your attention whilst I am dancing with you,” was his reply. “You do not allow me the privilege of being serious then Miss Daven-try?” added he, shortly after.

“Certainly not, when you are speaking of the perfections of my cousin.”

“At other times then?” said he.

“If you please,” said Charlotte, “you may sigh all day—groan—shed tears if you will—look grave and moralize--only not when you are dancing with me, or speaking of Sophy Stoketon. She said of you, by the bye, that she did not suppose you were troubled with much sensibility. I remember her saying it, so do not exclaim against it. It was Sophy told me so, and I must believe that she knows your character. She said, moreover, that she thought you could soon forget old friends—that you loved variety. There; you see that

your real character has been displayed to me, and that I am at liberty to quarrel with your being serious, because I know that it is not natural to you."

Captain Herbert ought to have been flattered still more with Sophy than with Charlotte Daventry at that moment, and his eyes certainly did wander to the corner of the room where she was seated.

The music ceased. Charlotte was taken to her chaperon. That chaperon was Lady Stoketon. Captain Herbert lingered for a little time near her, as Sophy was busy talking. She was too much occupied to look towards Charlotte and her partner, and he withdrew with a slight accession of pride apparent in his parting bow, as he relinquished Charlotte to the care of the young and lovely Lady Stoketon, who could not find time even to remark his presence.

“A little pique,” thought Charlotte, as she seated herself; “a little flattered vanity! My gallant Captain and my pretty bride, beware! Take good care of yourselves!—Take care, if you can!”

CHAPTER XII.

CHARLOTTE had the art of winning confidence, and she had more secrets confided to her than were ever before confided to any living being.

Will it be wondered then, that Lord Stoke-ton should make a confidante of her, even though he had not the slightest idea, for some time, that he had any confidences to make? yet, strange to say, he had once dropped a hint to Charlotte that he wished Sophy was not

quite so fond of gaiety : he never thought of making a confidence when he said so, and yet it ended in nothing less, and he spoke to Charlotte of his fears that Sophy was too fond of society and admiration. Till he began to talk of it, he was not quite certain whether he wished it otherwise ; but when he had opened his heart to her, nothing was so certain as that he felt a great deal of uneasiness, and that he had very great cause to do so ; that, in short, he had not felt half so much as he might have done, and that it was not easy to be sufficiently unhappy on the occasion. It was fortunate, he thought, that he had such a sensible, kind-hearted girl, as Charlotte to advise with. What will be said, when we venture to disagree with Lord Stoketon ? when we venture to say, that it had been fortunate for him, had he been deprived of such a kind and judicious counsellor ?

Charlotte Daventry left Alford in three weeks from her first arrival there. A shade had passed over the unalloyed happiness Anne had looked on with delight but a few months back. Did time dispel the shade? No it deepened—it was settled there!

Charlotte Daventry returned to Weston. She had found happiness: she left a blight: and she returned to Weston, gay and smiling as ever, and was warmly, fondly welcomed by Anne Grey.

“How pretty this bright sun makes everything look!” said Anne, to Charlotte, one day as the sun shone in gaily at the drawing-room window at Weston, lighting up the landscape without, and animating with its cheerful gleams the room within.

“After all, Charlotte! there is nothing like home. There is no happiness—no perfect happiness like that which home gives!”

Anne's countenance reflected her expression. There was a contented smile on her lips ; a bright yet quiet gladness in her eyes as she spoke.

“ And after all what ? ” said Charlotte, smiling. “ I must know of what that *éloge* on home is *apropos* ? ”

“ *Apropos* then,” said Anne, “ to our going to Dashwood next week. If I had my own way, I never would stir from home again ; — provided I could keep you all happy and contented around me,” added she. “ Who would ever leave the enjoyment of home ? the quiet peaceful feel — the happiness of retiring to bed each night trusting that one has passed the day innocently and profitably ! the happiness of waking each morning to a sense of duties, easy and pleasant to be performed, where one is sure of affection to reward and look kindly on every slight failing in their performance ! To

know that one can add cheerfulness and comfort to those one loves ! Oh ! surely, home is a happy place ! who would ever wish to leave it ?” and Anne turned her eyes, beaming with grateful happiness, to the placid scene from the window brightly touched with the rays of the setting sun.

Charlotte was silent for a few minutes. She was stooping over her embroidery frame, and her face was concealed as she bent over it.

“ Yes,” she said at length, “ you are an enthusiast, we all know, about home. I really am very fond of it, but I cannot say that I dislike a sight of the beau-monde too !”

In the evening the family were all assembled ; some working, some drawing, some reading ; Henry making a fishing net, with Anne’s assistance out of hard-knot-difficulties, and long stitches.

There had been a little music ; harp, piano,

and singing—the merry catch of “three blind mice,” in which William and Henry both joined. Then a new book had just arrived, and Mr. Grey was asked to read some of it aloud, and, like a good father, he consented; and how delightfully the work and drawing proceeded as he read!

Could any one have looked in on that happy family party, they might have said, No wonder that such a word as ‘comfortable’ was needed and invented by the English! What but ‘comfortable’ could express what is here before us? With no excitement! no alluring gaiety! no ‘spectacle!’ no vanity to be flattered! no well-studied graces to be displayed! It is peace and happiness, serene, and still as the fair unclouded brow of that gentle being, Anne Grey! She, who made the charm of home—who was formed to smile away displeasure—to bear reproof, to bear it herself instead

of others—to be unrepining to chase away care by cheerful looks, and cheerful words, to be pleased when others were, to laugh when others laughed—to weep when others wept!

“ Well, Charlotte,” said Anne, as with a happy kiss she wished her good-night; “ do not you think with me, that there is ‘ no place like home !’ as the hand organs have assured us for a few years past ?”

“ Yes, I do, and good-night, *mia carina* !”

“ Happy ! yes,” said Charlotte Daventry, as she stood musing in her room after Anne had closed the door. “ Yes, she has griefs and cares, yet she is contented and unrepining ! she is happy in conscious goodness—unspotted—sinless in thought. Happy, happy, being ! And I,” she exclaimed with vehemence, “ I, what am I ? what have happiness and Charlotte Daventry to do with one another ? Oh ! father ! father !” and she threw herself upon

the bed in mental agony; “why leave this bitter curse upon your child? Why glare upon me thus?—always there! Oh, leave me—leave me!” she writhed in anguish—“leave me but one moment’s peace! I would have wept upon her neck! I would have turned—fallen at her feet—said, Spurn, despise, condemn me—I would have crouched and sued for pity—for forgiveness—all—all, to have deserved one heart-felt smile like hers! That smile! did it not pierce my heart? Oh, God! I renounce it all! I will no more: I will turn, and repent, and renounce the task—the odious toil!

“But, ah! Oh, God! Hide me—hide me!” She started wildly forward, stared in horror for a moment, then, covering her face with both her hands, she exclaimed with frantic energy, half screaming in her agony: “Oh, God! t’was he! That face—father, had I forgotten? had I renounced? Oh, no, no!” she added with encreas-

ing vehemence. "Oh, no! Forgive! forgive!" She started forward, threw her arms on high, stood erect and firm: her eyes flashing with energetic resolve, looking fixedly on vacancy as if she beheld there a being she would address. "Father!" she uttered, whilst still she stood, her head bent forward and her arms extended. "Father! do not glare on me thus! I swear to persevere—to finish the work! I swear that love, nor pity, nor womanly fear, nor *womanly love*"—there was a thrilling energy as she pronounced those words—"nor remorse, shall turn me from my path. Father, I swear! your child had but for a moment forgotten!" and her attitude of determination and of energy was gone: the wild flashing of her eyes was over, her hands were folded gently on her bosom.

"Yes! but for one moment. What?" she smiled; (oh, the horror of such a smile!)

“What, did Charlotte Daventry think she had to do with happiness, with innocence? what strange mistake!” she smiled more bitterly again. “No, it was a momentary delusion. It is gone. Dear, happy home! Yes! that is for her, *that* was never meant for me. No! mine is hate, revenge, triumph,—and”—she shuddered,—“*despair!*”

CHAPTER XIII.

“MISS FOLEY has been here, Anne,” said Mrs. Grey, one morning, “and they want us all to go to Chatterton. They have some friends coming to them.”

“Mr. Temple,” perhaps, thought Anne. She actually laid down her work to listen.

“A very pleasant party it seems,” said Mrs. Grey. “There are to be —— ;” but, alas! she interrupted herself. “What *can* I have done with my scissors? Anne, are you sure you have not got them, by mistake? I am sure I had them a moment ago ;” and Mrs. Grey got up—looked on the floor—turned over all the work

on the table, and all the books, and all the things where they were least likely, and to tell the truth, impossible to be; would not listen to Anne's delicate hint that they might be in her work-bag.

“Impossible!”

Anne looked, and looked, and to do her justice, partly for the sake of her mother's work, as well as for her own unsatisfied curiosity as to *the who* were to be met at Chatterton.

“Why! I declare! how very strange!” exclaimed Mrs. Grey, after the animated search on tables, chairs, sofas, and floor, and under Anne's work, and under her drawing, had lasted for some time, Anne's curiosity encreasing every moment to know whether Mr. Temple might not, very probably, be named amongst Chatterton guests.

“Why! I declare! how strange,” said Mrs. Grey, “here they are at last!” and the scissors, true enough, were found in the natural place—in the work-bag, after all the ingenuity expended by Mrs. Grey in supposing them possibly in impossible places.

And then when she was seated again scissors in hand, she had time to think of what she had been saying.

“What was it I was talking of, Anne? Let me see, what was it I was saying? Oh! I remember, about our going to Chatterton. Well, my dear, your father says we must certainly go. The Hadleys are to be there, and the Astons—only think, Anne, the Astons! Never seen them for six—no for seven—let me see! I don’t know whether it is not eight years—eight years next March! Oh! and Mr. Temple is to be there.”

Anne’s heart beat twice as quick as usual, her eyes sparkled.

“What’s in a name?” people say. I say, a great deal! Anne could have given her mother a kiss at that moment for nothing more or less than a name!

She contented herself with a joyous bound out of the room, saying, “I must go and tell Charlotte!”

“Mrs. Grey looked after her for a moment in surprise: work and long-lost scissors actually fell from her hands as she closed the door!

“Why, what’s the matter?” thought she. “If it had been Charlotte or Sophy! Well! I am glad she is learning to enjoy it so much!” and Mrs. Grey settled more comfortably than ever to her tent-stitch.

“Charlotte! he is to be there! we are to meet him!” said Anne, half out of breath, as she shut the door of the room in which Charlotte was occupied in writing.

“He is to be there! and we are to meet him! Well, Anne,” said Charlotte smiling, “that is clear and comprehensive! I wish you joy, my dear little, quiet, composed, Anne. If that had been me, what a wise reproving look I might have earned!”

“Charlotte!” said Anne, in a deprecating tone, laughing and blushing.

“And, Anne!” rejoined Charlotte. “Come! do not let us play at cross questions, or sing different words to the same tune. Let us both exclaim in grand chorus, ‘Mr. Temple!’ Yes! I know! but now for a little clearer view of the case. You said ‘*He* is to be there!’ the *he* wants no explanation, for *he* read Mr. Tem-

ple. In the lingua, Anne Grey, we turn the pages of the dictionary ‘Letter H. He,’ meaning ‘Edward Temple.’ That is clear enough. But *there!* that is doubtful! so I must say, ‘Where?’”

Anne explained.

“Now, Anne, though I laugh at you a little,” said Charlotte, “you see I can laugh *with* you too, and I never was so pleased with any news in my life, because I am sure to what it will lead directly: a pleasing event! Am I to be brides-maid?”

“For shame, Charlotte!” but Anne was so happy, that she did not much mind being laughed at. She bore it like a stoic, but she was grave for a moment.

“Suppose, after all, that he should not care about me? suppose that he should be changed?” was the cause, or the result of the moment’s gravity, and she stopped and looked serious.

“Suppose, my dear Anne,” said Charlotte, in an equally grave voice, whilst Anne looked

anxiously at her, "suppose that this house is not Weston after all!"

"Charlotte!" said Anne, smiling once more.

"What! are we to begin our duet again?" said Charlotte, and she laughed. "Come, Anne, you must not be foolish and fanciful! You see it will not do. Go and be happy as you ought, and do not mar your happiness by doubts, and fears, and nonsense. Even I am forced to lecture you. Charlotte Daventry lecturing Anne Grey!"

"I wish you were not going away to-morrow," said Anne, perhaps because she wished to be lectured, which was certainly very amiable.

However our wishes, amiable though they may be, or appear to be, are not always gratified; and on the next day Charlotte Daventry went for a few days on a visit to some connections of her father's, Lady Harriet and Mr. Bingley.

Charlotte had lived in such strict seclusion with her father that, at the time she came to Weston, there was hardly a person whom she

knew ; and the Bingleys had been almost entire strangers to her. They had however met her lately, and claimed the connection and acquaintance. She was now going to visit them for a few days at their place, about twenty miles from Weston, and it was this engagement which interfered with Anne Grey's wish for daily conversation with her, on the subject of a visit to Chatterton.

Charlotte went, and whether Anne shed tears or not at her departure I cannot say ! All who think that she ought to have done so may suppose that she did ; all who think that tears were not called for, may believe that with stoical indifference she uttered ' Good bye,' with no more sorrow in the tone than lingers around the school-boy's farewell to his school-master, when holiday time releases school-boy and school-master alike, from the burthen of each other's society !

Soon after Charlotte's departure, Isabella Foley called, and her opinion on the subject was audibly expressed in her entering speech. " I thought you would be so lonely without Miss Daventry, that I came to see you."

Even the fragments of a broken vase are sometimes worth preserving, and even so may the fragments of a conversation be sometimes worth recording.

“I forgot to tell you,” said Isabella, “what, after all, my heart is full of! my brother is coming home in about a week! Do not you congratulate me?” said she, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

“Yes indeed!” said Anne, feeling at the same time a little unpleasant sensation, which she thought it quite unnecessary to shew.

“Oh! how I wish, Miss Grey,” said Isabella; but she checked herself, and only cast an appealing look at Anne.

Anne could not mis-interpret the look, and the words.

“I know what you wish, I believe,” said Anne, blushing; “but it cannot be,” she added more firmly.

“Are you so very sure, dear Miss Grey?” said Isabella. “Will not time—may it not!—Oh! how happy dear George might be, and how happy it would make me if you could only—”

“No, no,” said Anne, interrupting her. “You know how much I esteem your brother : how much gratitude I feel for his favourable opinion—but it never can be any other feeling, dear Miss Grey ; and indeed,” she added, smiling, “you are supposing what may not be the case. Absence may have altered his feelings, and I cannot help hoping that it has. He may no longer desire that which he did when he left England.”

“No, that is not the case,” said Isabella, rather sorrowfully. “He mentions you always ! and in this last letter he tells me he is not changed.”

Anne blushed, sighed, and looked sorry. It was an unfeigned sorrow—an uncoquettish blush and sigh. She wished for George Foley’s friendship, but she did not wish for his love, for she could not return it. Though there is something flattering and soothing to the feelings of most young ladies, in the idea of having a poor lover constantly sighing and sorrowing, for the sake of their ‘*beaux yeux*,’ Anne Grey was insensible enough not to experience this pleasure.

The next day and again the next were spent by Anne in happy anticipation of what the following week would bring. She should certainly see Edward Temple: of that there could be no doubt, and changed!—oh no! he could not be changed! What a weak contemptible character that would suppose him to be: it was most uncharitable! Anne Grey's benevolent heart could not allow it. It was doing him the greatest injustice to entertain a doubt! he certainly would be the same! and perhaps—her heart beat quick at the thought, “perhaps in a few more days”—the barking of Charlotte's favourite spaniel at that moment interrupted her train of thought.

It is a sad thing, what trifles can dispel the brightest visions—demolish the most beautiful castles in the air. But for this little spaniel—Sir Isaac Newton's was nothing to it—Anne might in a few more minutes have placed herself in the presence of Mr. Temple, have listened with glowing happiness to the avowal of his love.

But Fido dispelled the pleasing vision, and

she returned to the house watching its gambols, and thinking whether a black or a brown dog were the prettiest; or an Italian greyhound much to be preferred to a spaniel. Certainly for placing in a sketch!

“Letters! any for me, mama?” said Anne.

“Yes, one, my dear, from Charlotte, I think.”

“I am glad of that!” and Anne took the letter to her room. “She is a dear girl to have written!” thought she.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Anne had taken off her bonnet and shawl, she opened her letter with a comfortable feeling of pleasure, which those not accustomed to the receipt of letters on business may perhaps understand.

She broke the seal—glanced down the page—turned to the beginning, whilst her colour might have been observed to mount to her cheeks, and even spread to her temples.

“I am going to give you pain, dearest Anne,” were the first words.

Anne had already seen Mr. Temple’s name in the long and closely written letter. She

saw that Charlotte had met him. Her hand shook so violently, she could scarcely hold the letter, and for a time her eagerness to know what Charlotte had to communicate was useless. Her eyes swam so that she could not read a syllable.

A few minutes brought some degree of composure. She sat down and began to read :—

“ I am going to give you pain, dearest
“ Anne,” it said : “ and I need not speak of my
“ own distress in being obliged to do so. It is
“ my duty. It would be of no use, and I feel
“ it would be wrong, to conceal from you
“ the truth, painful as it must be. I trust to
“ your firmness—your good sense, my poor
“ dear Anne, to support you. You will exert
“ your fortitude and energy of character now
“ that I fear—alas ! I *know* that they will be
“ needed. You require no assurances of sympathy and affection from me. You know
“ that they are yours, nor will you doubt that
“ at this moment I am longing to be with you.
“ Yet, it is better that I should relate by letter

“ what I would sooner have pierced myself to
“ the heart than have to tell.”

But we will give in our own words the purport of Charlotte Daventry’s letter. The intelligence, which at one hasty glance, Anne saw that it contained was this—Edward Temple had deceived her—Edward Temple was unworthy of her.

This was the purport of the letter, and the facts spoke too clearly to admit a doubt of its truth. He was staying at the Bingleys’. They knew him well. They had seen much of him both in town and in the country, and were better able to judge of his character than those who had seen him in the country, and in one particular circle alone, where he might, for his own purposes, and in the absence of temptation, play the amiable, quiet, right-minded man.

Charlotte had talked a good deal to the Miss Bingleys about him. She had been anxious for information on Anne’s account: what she had heard, however distressing to learn, she was still thankful to have become

acquainted with now, rather than later; for the sooner Anne's delusion was dispelled the better for her peace, her happiness, her prospects in life! When Charlotte found that the Bingleys knew Mr. Temple well (which she would certainly hardly have supposed from their manner towards him), she felt anxious to hear their opinion of his character, and, without exciting suspicion, she sought for information regarding him: the result was as follows. Charlotte had begun, as was most natural by praising him—his agreeableness—his cleverness were discussed, and they perfectly agreed. So unlike other men of the world, who are apt to be spoilt—to become cold, selfish, and heartless, was next ventured on by Charlotte. But here the Miss Bingleys did not so perfectly agree with her. Yes, certainly—men of the world were apt to be so: yes, Mr. Temple was a man of the world. They allowed this very readily, but they seemed unconscious of his claims to the flattering distinction between him and others.

In short, by following up the conversation,

Charlotte extracted a great deal of information, which was most painful and distressing to her to hear. Edward Temple was not a marrying man (*that* Anne had once heard before from Lady Hadley. Oh! would she had remembered it better! would she had never allowed herself to be blinded!).

“Mr. Temple is certainly not a man ever to think of marrying,” said Miss Bingley, “and that I suppose is the palliation he makes to himself for conduct which would otherwise be so inexcusable. He believes perhaps, or affects to believe, that all the world are acquainted with this fact.”

“He has behaved so ill in one or too instances,” said Jane Bingley, “that in charity we must suppose he makes some excuse to himself. We happen to know a great deal about him—unhappily,” continued she, “for one of those to whom he devoted himself was a relation of ours. Hers was a melancholy history,” she added, “and I fear but a common one, if there are really many such characters as Mr. Temple in the world. He met her in the country; paid

her every attention; was always coming into the neighbourhood where her father resided; and assumed the most amiable feelings, to win the heart of this pretty, unsophisticated girl. He succeeded. He won her affections, and never sought to meet her again. All invitations into the neighbourhood, before so eagerly sought, now were useless. Her happiness was gone: but that did not signify! his vanity was satisfied, and he thought no more of her. Poor girl!" said Jane Bingley, with a sigh. "She was an amiable creature; gentle, affectionate, and good! Her heart was broken. A year after his desertion, she died!"

Jane Bingley paused in emotion. The recollection of her cousin affected her strongly even at this distance of time.

"It is now two years since her death," she continued, "and we have seen but little of Mr. Temple since: we *wished* to see but little, but my father has just kept up the forms of civility. This is almost the first time he has been in the house since then: but we have often heard of him, and seen him, as we could not

fail of doing in London, when we met at the same parties, night after night : we saw him, this very Spring devoting himself as we had seen him before. It was to a young, inexperienced girl ; fresh from the school-room : pretty, diffident, and retiring. Miss Greville was exactly the person for his attentions, and he paid them assiduously : sometimes, as I was seated near them at a party, and I could not avoid overhearing some of his conversation, I longed to give her a warning. I saw that her heart was won—her tone, her look, her confusion all told that tale. I thought of my poor cousin, and it made me sigh for this poor girl. Before the season was over, he was attracted by some new face, and he deserted her. Every one remarked how ill Miss Greville looked. I heard her friends were uneasy about her—they thought that hot rooms and late hours had been too much for her, and she was taken away to try the effect of country air—little use for a broken heart ! She left London, how changed to what she had been—to what she had entered it but a few weeks before ! I cannot

forget her colourless face, and mournful countenance, as I watched her sometimes when she had seen him devoting himself to her rival. No," she added, after a pause, "Mr. Temple is a man whom, admired, flattered, courted as he is, I could never look on but with abhorrence. He may be envied, and he is; but, with all his advantages, I could never envy a man whose real character every amiable and sensible person must despise in their hearts."

This conversation Charlotte repeated, and more still was related to pierce Anne to the heart. She told her that Mr. Temple had asked after her with something like an assumption of interest, but with evident unconcern. She said that she believed her indignation was betrayed in her countenance at the moment, and she fancied he perceived it, for he immediately exerted himself to amuse her. He studiously put forth all his powers of conversation with the intention, no doubt, of fascinating her imagination against her better judgment.

"But my eyes were opened," continued Charlotte. "Would to heaven, dearest Anne,

“ that you had been warned before ! I can
“ hardly bear to think of your feelings. I long
“ to be with you, to try to comfort you ! and yet
“ perhaps, for a little time to be alone will be
“ best for you. It is with this idea I write ;
“ but, the morning after you receive this letter
“ I shall be at Weston. I can scarcely endure
“ the sight of this man—this person whom I
“ admired so much—Dearest Anne ! how I re-
“ proach myself for having encouraged your
“ love for him ! May heaven help, support, and
“ comfort you, my poor Anne.”

The letter was read through. Every word was read. Anne shed no tear. She had never moved during the time she perused it. Her eagerness to know the whole kept all emotion still : but, when the last word had been read—when she had no more to know, no more to hope—no mitigation to receive, the cause of her calmness was removed. Her emotions overpowered her. Her head fell forwards ; all power, feeling, sense were gone, and she fainted.

If any have swooned under the shock of a

sudden and painful communication, they will understand the misery which attends the return to feeling and memory. Anne Grey returned to consciousness. Something dreadful had happened: she put her hand to her forehead, "Yes! or it is a dream? I thought"—and her eyes fell on the letter which had dropped to the ground, and then all returned. She knew it was no dream.

Her senses nearly forsook her a second time as the truth again rushed upon her mind. "I know it now," she said. "Oh! why have I no tears; it cannot be true, or I should have wept—surely I should have wept!" but the recollection of the reality forced itself fully upon her mind, and, after awhile, Anne leant her head on the table, and sobbed without controul.

She was roused by hearing Henry's step along the passage. In a few minutes he gave his usual brisk, and noisy knock at the door, and in his lively, joyous tone called out "Anne! Anne, may I come in?"

Anne started, and as she raised her head she shuddered. It was happiness and misery that

came in contact, they clashed, and she shuddered.

“I cannot see you now,” said she.—
“Presently!”—

“Oh! very well,” replied Henry. “I was coming for a comfortable coze, but I will finish my book, and come again,” and he walked off, whistling with light-hearted gaiety as he went.

Anne listened to the sound of his retreating steps. “He is gone,” said she; “but an hour before I was gay and happy as he! poor boy! it will be a blow to him too.”

She took up her letter, went to the door, opened it, and with slow steps, descended the stairs to her fathers’ sitting room. She went in and found him there. He looked up:—

“Any news in your letter?” said he.

Anne mournfully shook her head, “I want you to read it,” said she, giving him Charlotte Daventry’s letter as she seated herself.

Mr. Grey did not perceive her emotion: he took the letter and began to read. He read the first line, gave a little start, and a quick glance at Anne. He went on, and as he came to Jane

Bingley's narration, the blood rushed to his face; he laid his hand on that of Anne's, and warmly grasped it in his own.

As he proceeded, "Base, cowardly villain," he muttered; "My poor child!" and again the hand he held in his was warmly pressed. Anne writhed under the words which fell from her father's lips against the person whom she had loved; alas! whom still she loved!

The letter at length was finished, and Mr. Grey, turning his face full of pity and sorrow towards her, affectionately placed his arm round her. Anne's calmness was at an end. She threw her arms round her father's neck, and burst into an agony of tears.

"The villain! treacherous villain!" muttered Mr. Grey, in uncontrolled indignation, "My sweet innocent child!" as he warmly pressed her to his heart. "What? could he not spare you! must he fix on you too! my child! my darling Anne!" and as he leant his head against her cheek—felt the tears trickling down—heard the half-suppressed sobs, he

could contain himself no longer, and his tears mingled with those of his child.

For a time neither of them spoke. Anne sobbed quietly and uninterruptedly, as she lay in her father's arms. There is something soothing in sympathising pity, and she became more composed; and when her father spoke she raised her head, and looked at him with almost a smile on her face, as she thanked him for his love.

"It is very hard to bear!" said she, after another silence, and pressing her hand to her heart, whilst the tears again burst forth.

"It is a sad blow to you, my child," said Mr. Grey, "and it must be felt. But you have sense—you have firmness of mind—firmness of principle. You have more—you have religion."

Anne's gentle pressure of her father's hand shewed that she felt and acknowledged its value; that she owned its influence.

"Dearest Anne!" said Mr. Grey, warmly, as he affectionately pressed her to his heart. "If my pity—my affection—a father's truest pity, affectionate care,"—his voice faltered, and he paused for a moment, whilst Anne's tears fell

silently on his hand. "If a father's warmest love can give any consolation, you know how fully it is yours!" Anne could only thank him by her looks and the pressure of his hand. Her tears choked her utterance.

It will not be necessary to relate all that passed between the father and child. Anne, with forgiving gentleness, half tried to exculpate Mr. Temple, as her father expressed his indignation against his character, by taking blame to herself.

"I feel that I have to accuse my own vanity in fancying he could love me," said she.

But Mr. Grey could not allow this excuse—strange indeed if he had!

But whilst indignant with Edward Temple, he also bitterly accused himself of indolence and negligence, in allowing the attentions of such a person, without obtaining more information concerning his character, even though the voice of the world had at once cast a suspicion upon it, by pronouncing him to be one of themselves—a man of the world!

Anne would not allow that the slightest

blame was attached to her father, as he alluded to his feelings on this subject.

“No, no!” said she eagerly, almost forgetting her own sorrow in anxiety to exculpate him. “Do not say that. It was my fault.—only mine! you allowed me to hope: but it was only from what I myself told you—from what perhaps my vanity had made me misinterpret! Dearest papa, do not speak of blaming yourself—that grieves me more than anything. Yes, almost more than *his*,”—her lip quivered—“than *his* unkindness.”

“Dearest Anne!” and Mr. Grey kissed the with warmth. He was obliged to turn away his face to hide his emotion.

“You shall see,” continued she, wiping the tears from her eyes, and proudly raising her head, “you shall see that I am worthy of your kindness, if my earnest endeavours to be so are successful; great as the blow has been to me”—and her quivering lip and the death-like paleness of her face, succeeding the bright flush called up by a moment of enthusiasm, showed how great it had been—“you shall see that I

can struggle against my feelings, when I know that it is my duty to do so. I can be cheerful, if you will only continue to smile on me with approbation, to say that you are pleased with your poor little Anne," and she laid her head half smilingly on his arm. "I feel that I can be cheerful and happy!"—there was something in the word 'happy,' that caused her to pause—something that too strongly belied her feelings at the moment; but she seemed to overcome her momentary weakness, and said with firmness, "Yes, *happy*, for all who strenuously endeavour to fulfil their duties must be happy: is it not so, papa?"

"Yes, yes my darling Anne," said Mr. Grey, with emotion, as he pressed her in his arms. "You will—you deserve to be! never before did I know how much I had to be proud of in my child! never before did I love you as I do at this moment!" and he kissed her again and again.

Before Anne quitted her father, she asked that he would tell her mother all that had passed.

“I cannot speak of it calmly myself, I fear,” said she; “and mama will hear it better from you. I have still another favour to ask,” she added. “It would be very painful to me to have the subject discussed; indeed I feel as if I could scarcely bear it! Will you then say that I wish—that it would be a comfort to me if I felt sure that no allusion would be made to it? I feel it is better it should not be named again: my mind having once been relieved by the expression of my feelings, it will perhaps be better for me to let it be entirely dropped for the future.”

Anne returned to her own room: how changed in feeling! how different to what she had been but a few short hours before, when she had walked out in rapturous delight at the thoughts of meeting Edward Temple once more.

The meeting so fondly anticipated must now be shunned! her only chance of happiness must be in avoiding all future ones, and in forgetting the past. She must learn to forget him—to forget all that had made her happiness for so long a period—all that had been blended in her

mind with every thought, and pleasure, and circumstance. She found that it had been long indeed since she first began to unite him in her thoughts with all that occurred to her. Pursuits, improvement, pleasures, duties, everything had been connected with him—had been for his sake, with a view to his approbation, or to render herself worthy to be loved by him. She must now eradicate the feelings and associations which had entwined themselves with every action of her life, and had seemed to form the charm of her existence.

Anne returned to her room; the rush of thought and recollection crowded upon her, and threatened once more to overwhelm her. She threw herself upon her knees, and humbly and earnestly prayed for that help which is never asked in vain. She prayed for assistance to enable her to bear with resignation the sorrow that had befallen her. To bear without a murmur the blighting of her happiness in life. She prayed not in vain: she rose from her knees with a feeling of serene and almost cheerful hope.

CHAPTER XV.

THE next day Charlotte Daventry returned.

The meeting between her and Anne was painful. There was a violent burst of grief on Anne's part. She was completely overpowered for a time, by the agony of feeling called forth upon the first sight of Charlotte, but she struggled to be calm, and she succeeded; and that evening she sat occupying herself, as usual, in the family circle, calm, and to an unobserving spectator, she might perhaps, have borne the appearance of cheerfulness.

Mr. Grey had taken care that nothing should occur to agitate her. No allusion was made to the subject of her distress. Mrs. Grey only called her 'dear Anne,' every word she said to her—looked very sorry, and spoke in a gentle, subdued voice.

And Charlotte Daventry! how did she watch the poor gentle Anne? How did she watch with eager interest the care-worn face—the faint smiles—the slight tremor in the lips—the languid form! How did she listen to the heart-rending misery of those tones, that voice, whose gentle gaiety had ever possessed such a gladdening, soothing charm! now, alas! gone! whilst the effort to be cheerful only spoke more utter desolation and wretchedness. How did she watch the picture of patient suffering, of unrepining misery, of blighted happiness in one so lovely, young, and gentle.

Charlotte Daventry watched intently! Anne knew, at times, that she was watching her, and she thanked her in her heart, and tried to hide her secret agony in the smile—the cheerful tone.

Charlotte Daventry watched, and she stooped at times over her work to conceal her emotion. Nay! she did not smile! it could not be! Anne Grey smiled, the sufferer smiled, but Charlotte Daventry could not!

And what were the feelings of the affectionate warm-hearted boy, Henry, when told what had passed? What were his feelings when he sat watching his dear sister Anne, his own darling Anne, that evening?

His indignation and his wretchedness had been extreme; and, now, as he saw her patiently smiling, whilst her face was pale, her eyes dim, and her lip, at times, quivering with repressed feeling, he could not conceal his emotion. He was obliged to quit the room to hide his tears, and compose himself to return again; and then, as he looked at her, he was once more overcome. He thought it was not manly to cry, but he could not help it: "who could help crying for her?" and he sobbed with bitterness as he thought of her distress.

"How he wished the cowardly villain were there that he might be punished by the sight,

as even he must be if he could see her; he wished he could know how they all despised him. How he wished he were old enough to fight him. He would taunt him, challenge him, shoot him to the heart, and proclaim him to all the world a traitor and a coward ! ”

These were boyish feelings, and mixed with boyish error and romance, and yet, with Henry, who would not wish that the secret bringer of misery, the treacherous blighter of happiness to the young, the light-hearted, the confiding, could, if it were possible, be held up to shame !

“ My dear boy,” said his father to Henry, “ you must learn to restrain your feelings. By allowing them to appear you are adding unhappiness to your sister.”

“ Am I ! am I ? ” cried Henry vehemently, “ then nothing shall make me shew what I am feeling ! but, really, I cannot bear to see her ! ” and he turned his face away from his father.

Mr. Grey took his hand. “ I do not blame you for your feelings, my dear boy, and I know it is a difficult task to restrain them. But we must think of Anne. Think how she restrains

her feelings for our sake. Her's are more difficult to repress than ours, Henry, and yet, you see, she does repress them."

"Yes, yes! I know it," said Henry. "What a brute I must be to have helped to give her pain! but it is seeing her so patient, there is something in that that I cannot bear. How I wish," he added vehemently after a pause, "that the fellow were here, that he might be cut to the heart with the sight!"

Anne's feelings were indeed difficult to restrain. She was possessed of a strong and well regulated mind; her temper was composed and serene; but these qualities were united to ardent affections, and an acute sensitiveness of feeling. Gentle as she was, she had not too readily bestowed her heart, but, when once it had been given, it was truly, and for ever. She loved with all the tenderness of her nature, and terrible was the blow when she found her affections misplaced. She had trusted fondly and confidently, and she felt herself deceived.

She had to exert every power of endurance and resignation to support her from sinking

under the bitter consciousness of affections wounded, trampled on, and disregarded. Her parents and family were relieved by witnessing her seeming cheerfulness, and began to hope that she felt less what she endured so patiently ; but, alas ! she had exerted too much. In rather less than a week after she had received Charlotte Daventry's letter, as she sat at work in the evening, Mr. Grey was startled by an exclamation from Charlotte. Anne had fallen back in her chair. She was senseless.

She was carried to her room, the usual restoratives were applied, and, after a time, her senses returned ; but it was in vain she struggled to support herself—all power of exertion was gone—she lay still and half fainting on the bed.

Medical assistance was called in. The family apothecary, a clever man, though a strange eccentric character, arrived. He was eagerly questioned, by Mr. Grey, as soon as he quitted his patient's apartment. He declared that Miss Grey was evidently suffering under the effects of mental distress, some sudden and

severe blow, which had been too much for her delicate frame.

“ I always speak the truth, Sir,” said he to the anxious father. “ Your daughter is very ill, and will be very ill. I see she has had something on her mind. You should not have allowed it, Sir. It shall not be a brain fever—we shall save her from that. Something near it. But don’t be alarmed,” as he saw Mr. Grey’s agitated face. “ Come, all will be well! only I will not give false hopes. She will not be well yet. She’ll have an illness, but she’ll come out of it,” and he quitted the room leaving Mr. Grey in an alarming state of anxiety, although still relying on the words of the apothecary, which promised him that Anne should recover.

His reliance was severely put to the test. For days and nights did she lie scarcely seeming to live; her face pale as death, her eyes half closed; at other times her pallid cheeks flushing with fever, her eyes sparkling with unnatural brilliancy, and wildly talking in her delirium.

Her parents watched over her anxiously and fearfully. There was hope, the physician said, who had been called in as her illness increased. “She may recover.”

“She *may*!” Oh, what fearful words to a parent’s heart! Their child—their sweet child. Her life then hung upon a thread. ‘She *may* recover.’ There was then merely a chance! there was hope indeed, but how much of fear!

Silently they sat by the bed of sickness, and there lay the patient, gentle Anne, pale—wasted—suffering—unconscious. She moved at times, whilst her half closed eyes vacantly and heavily gazed upon the anxious watchers round.

“There is hope! Oh, God! there is hope, and may it be? Oh, may she live! Oh, God! grant that she may live! and yet so pure, so gentle, and so perfect! is she not for Thee, is she not Thine? is it not a selfish prayer? and, yet, my own sweet child! light, and peace, and joy of my home! Oh! not yet—take her not yet!”

Such was the father's mental prayer. His eyes were turned eagerly and intently on her face. She moved, unclosed her eyes. He sought to read the physician's countenance. He was watching too, and his face was anxious, but there was pleasure in his look as he saw the slight movement, and the half unclosing of her heavy eye-lids. He looked up; he caught the father's eye.

"All will be well," was gently whispered. "I *hope* that all will be well."

"Thank God!" was the father's inward ejaculation; but he did not speak: he buried his face in his hands; the thanksgiving was mentally uttered, and then his eyes were once more on his child.

The tear stood there as he looked again on her pallid form, but it was no longer the tear of anguish. It was one of gratitude; it arose from a thankful heart.

The crisis was over. The hours of agonizing doubt and fear were at an end!, yet there were many sorrowful and anxious days to come. The poor sufferer still lay weak, and helpless, and

oh ! the anguish in that care-worn face ! did it not speak of a broken heart !

“ Ought I not to be thankful, dearest Charlotte ? ” whispered she, to her cousin, one day as she sat watching by her bed. “ Ought I not to be thankful that I am saved ? for I might have died ! ” and she stopped in strong emotion.

“ I have been very ill,” she said again, “ and yet, though I am saved, I cannot be thankful as I ought. It is sad, so sad ! ” and she pressed her hand to her heart as the tears rolled fast and silently down her cheeks, whilst Charlotte sat bending over her too much affected to speak.

But Anne recovered—it was slowly, very slowly, and it was sad indeed to see her as she rose from her bed : to see her pale face and wasted form. Sickness and sorrow had, indeed, been busy there ! Sometimes the painful thought came across her as she lay weak and suffering on her bed, ‘ how was it *she* should have thus suffered, whilst *he*, the cause of all, was gay and happy ? ’ When insensibility and delirium

had passed away, her mind was once more capable of exercising its powers. It awoke to memory. It was hard, at such a time to be thankful. Illness had not altered the cause for sorrow : that was as poignant as ever, but it rendered the frame more delicate which must now struggle with grief. For many days she had retained only a confused recollection of something painful, but of the existence of which she was uncertain ; but with the return of consciousness, memory brought back the truth in all its vivid reality.

“ It is not a dream, and I *am* unhappy ! ”

Some may have known the wretchedness of that conviction as it forces itself first upon the mind after insensibility, illness, or sleep, had lulled them into moments, or hours, of forgetfulness. Some may have known it, but happy those who have been spared !

Anne Grey felt the bitterness of that return to consciousness. She awoke from her delirium, and she knew that she was unhappy.

“ Yes, he is gay and careless, thought she.
“ He is in the midst of pleasure ! whilst I am

lying here suffering, broken - hearted ! Yes, whilst I was lying on the point of death, whilst there was but a thread between life and death, he was, perhaps, at that very moment laughing and talking, careless that I was in danger ! Oh God ! support me. It is a bitter thought !” and she tried to forget : but how useless the attempt where the whole mind is imbued with one painful subject forcing away all others.

“ Charlotte,” said she gently to her cousin who sat by her bed, “ what day is this ? ”

Charlotte named the day : Anne turned round with a groan. It was the very day that she was to have met Edward Temple at Chatterton !

“ He is there then,” thought she. “ He is there close to me. He hears, he must hear of my illness—my danger. But will it make any difference ? No, he will be as gay as ever : he, who once in that house expressed such interest : who—but I must not think of that,” and she turned towards Charlotte and tried to talk to her.

Edward Temple was not at Chatterton as Anne supposed. His excuse had been sent at the time of Charlotte Daventry's return to Weston from her visit to the Bingleys', and he was, probably, thus left in ignorance of her state.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANNE had time to reflect on her own conduct with regard to Edward Temple. As yet, she could not bear to believe him wholly to blame. Had the sin been against herself alone, she would probably have excused him, by at once taking all to herself. And still! might there not be some palliation? The facts were true, but there might be circumstances attending them that none but herself could know. There could not be a doubt as to his indifference towards herself, or of the fact of his having paid attentions to others, which had ended in their

unhappiness; but still, Anne thought there might be excuses.

To believe the object of her attachment unworthy was indeed a most bitter feeling. She felt that even to be separated from him for ever, or to see him married to another, would have been a comparatively trifling sorrow, could she but still have esteemed him. Often did she try to find every or any excuse for him. Perhaps, thought she, he is easily captivated by beauty, real or imaginary: he may be charmed for the moment and carried on beyond what his calmer judgment can sanction. But, then, might he not have given some hint that he had loved before, that he was likely not to be constant? When he saw that I loved him, had he been generous, he would have done this. But not a word! He was anxious to deceive, that he might ensure the continuance of his own selfish amusement. For this he could sacrifice me! Oh, how unlike the Edward Temple that I believed him to be! "But, yet," thought Anne, "can it be? Perhaps he thought that I ought not to have believed he could

love me? And yet, what other could I think?" His words, his looks, came full on her mind. "His knowledge that I loved him! Yes! he could not be deceived in that!" The faint colour rushed to her face at the idea. "Oh! what would I give that he were!"

How much less bitter if I could still respect and esteem him! But, perhaps he *is* still estimable? There must be some mistake. It is impossible that he could thus have spoken—have assured me so often by look and manner that he loved me—have seemed so anxious for my approbation—so solicitous for my welfare—so fearful lest the world should spoil me—so easily wounded by any appearance of indifference on my part. Could he calmly, and deliberately have laid down a plan to deceive me? When he saw that I believed in his love, could he still coldly, and calculatingly persevere? Oh no, it never can be true! And yet, how well he knew I loved him," the colour mounted to her pale face; "how well he knows it even now! and yet he can desert, forget—he can—" she shuddered, it was too much! The thought

of herself, and her sufferings, whilst he who had pretended thus to love, whom she had loved so devotedly, remained careless that he was causing her misery! the thought was too bitter. She buried her face in her hands and burst into a violent fit of tears, sobbing with hysterical violence, whilst Charlotte Daventry watched over her with looks of anxious pity and commiseration.

But, Anne, in time, became more firm, and when she left her room, though pale and weakened by illness, it was with the resolution to think no more of one who was undeserving of her thoughts. She tried to feel happy and resigned. She came down stairs cheerful and composed, as far as her strength permitted, entered into all her usual occupations, and listened and attended to the wishes, the cares, the trifling interests, grievances, or pleasures, of those around her. She resolved that none should see that she was less happy than formerly, and her resolution was acted upon.

It was in the calm routine of domestic life, in the fulfilment of her duties, the scrupulous

attendance to the happiness of others, that she endeavoured to forget an attachment which she now looked upon as culpable.

Yes, Anne Grey! persevere in that calm and holy path, and here, even here, you will meet your reward. Those looks of love—those cheerful faces—those kind approving words—these all are yours, and in your heart there lives the conscious sense of rectitude—of firm and well-directed fortitude! Though the brightness has faded from your eye, though your smile has lost its gaiety, and your step its buoyancy, yet, even here, you have your reward; even here, we can envy you.

Time passed away, and every thing at Weston went on once more as usual. The remembrance of past anxiety had faded from the minds of most; yet, perhaps, by all it was not yet forgotten. Perhaps, on some, sorrow had left its traces—had left impressions never to be effaced—had left a blank not to be filled again.

It will be asked, did Edward Temple know of Anne Grey's illness? Could he, if he had

known of her danger, have been careless and unfeeling?

Even so it appeared, for he *was* acquainted with it.

At the time of her greatest danger, Edward Temple, and Sir Henry Poynton, were staying together at the house of a mutual friend. One day, as all the party were engaged in the interesting occupation of reading letters, Sir Henry suddenly exclaimed in a tone of horror, "Good, God! Anne Grey is not likely to live! she is in the greatest danger. Good God!" continued he, "how dreadful! That sweet girl!"

At that moment the door was closed. Edward Temple had left the room. What, then! was he too indifferent to make him care to remain in the room whilst her illness was mentioned? or was he unwilling to hear more on this subject?

There was one who did not seem so indifferent to the knowledge of Anne's danger: this was George Foley. He had returned to England, and was at Chatterton during her illness. Absence had not diminished his love

for Anne, and nothing could exceed the agony with which he awaited the issue of her illness, the dreadful suspense and anxiety of those days, during which her life was almost despaired of.

Mrs. Grey, in the goodness of her heart, wished that he might be rewarded for all he had suffered during her illness, in the way most accordant with his wishes. Mr. Grey was not quite without sharing this hope, for he thought highly of George Foley, and believed that no person could be more capable of rendering his daughter happy.

Time seemed to give some foundation to his hope. George Foley had won Anne's esteem, and there seemed a chance that he might win her heart. Anne could not admit the chance; her affections had once been given, and they could not easily be bestowed a second time. A blight had been cast upon her, and she felt that nothing would restore to her the freshness of her former feelings. She was dead to the sentiment of love, but esteem and friendship might take its place, and might satisfy the

wishes of a lover who knew that he could never hope for more: she even allowed, that should she ever be induced to marry, George Foley would be the person on whom she would bestow her hand, provided he could be satisfied with so cold a return for his ardent devotion.

CHAPTER XVII.

I BELIEVE that nothing is so unsatisfactory to the feelings of a person of sensibility as to be but half miserable. To be completely so is a height of enjoyment which all must envy, but to which none but heroes and heroines ever attain. Some little happy event will interfere, and rouse the despairing, indolent mind to the trouble of smiling. Every one knows the trouble of a smile, from the unhappy sentimentalist, to the sulky child who is forced into one, when virtue has triumphed over dignity, after a five minutes' state of pouting enjoyment.

With a full appreciation of the delights of sorrow, I could have wished to have ended my book in one unvaried strain of melancholy ; but alas ! it cannot be, for the bells at Alford tell a different tale, and the tale is repeated in the broad and merry smiles which play on the face of Mrs. Grey. Lady Stoketon was become the mother of a fine boy : the finest baby of course that ever was seen : so all the servants in the house pronounced it to be, so Mrs. Grey pronounced it to be, and so every one pronounced it to be who came after its birth on congratulatory visits to Alford.

What a quantity of the finest babies that ever were seen there must be in the world.

Mrs. Grey was the happiest of grandmothers. She had gone with never-ceasing delight through the routine of gruel, month nurses, babies' cries, dill water, caudle, tea and toast ; and if Mrs. Grey had not been happy, what grandmother on earth can ever expect to be so, for all went on well, thanks to her excellent nursing !

Sophy came down looking pretty and inte-

resting, baby was the finest child ever seen ; Mrs. Grey was the happiest of women : and she returned to Weston two months after the birth of the son and heir, loaded with happiness and an invaluable treasure ! a very small piece of something, that she assured every one was a lock of hair, a lock of Sophy's fine baby's fine hair. It was very fine ; some people perhaps might have found it difficult to see it ; but then it was enveloped in plenty of silver paper and writing paper, it was labelled in large letters with the day of the week, month, year, name of the infant, and the number of days old ; so that it was altogether a curious and interesting relic.

Charlotte Daventry was left with Sophy, and she was promised a reward for the seclusion of the few last months by plenty of gaiety.

It was exactly the time of year for it : it was the period when the woods, the fields, and the hedges were taking a long farewell of greenness and sunshine : and in their russet dresses stood prepared for the cold, the storm, and the snow. Nature gives one bright smile before she becomes a dead letter. Man then steps forth in

all his glory, and puts forward his little claims to be gay and consequential. Nature resigns the task with a sigh and a smile, in pity and contempt to see the pigmy man taking her place, and thinking to be gay when she is sad. But man heeds neither the smile, nor the sigh. He lights the fires—he calls for the candles—he ignites the gas—he writes his notes of invitation; he has built a house, and he fills it; and what does he care for nature? He is a pigmy, but he does not know it, and he shoots, he hunts, he dances, and is gay: and nature sleeps whilst he is hard at work on trifles, and toiling with a breathless speed and a useless haste after that bright unknown, ever flying from his grasp—that glittering deceiver, pleasure.

It was at this happy time of the year, Charlotte Daventry was left at Alford; archeries and races were dying away; winter balls and visiting commencing.

Lady Stoketon was very fond of her baby. It was a charming plaything, and Sophy was delighted to play with it; but she had not the slightest idea of remaining more at home because she was a happy mother.

Lord Stoketon thought differently. He was so fond of his child, that he would willingly have remained at home all winter for the pleasure of watching its progress, and seeing Sophy nursing and playing with it. Charlotte Daventry seemed to agree with him in his view of the subject. She thought that the wish to leave home with the baby there was extraordinary: but she never said so when Sophy was present. On the contrary, when alone with her, Charlotte's good nature carried her so far as to make her express her concurrence in the folly of re-remaining at home. In short Charlotte and Lady Stoketon agreed that it would be quite absurd for her to be always shut up at Alford. Charlotte, impelled by the feeling of the moment, even hinted that she thought Lord Stoketon rather unkind for wishing her to do so.

How was it possible for Lady Stoketon to dissent, as she listened to her words, and saw the admiring looks of Charlotte resting on her countenance! and if she, who was only her cousin, was so anxious that she should enjoy the amusement so well suited to her age, was it not

unnatural that a husband should be wanting in the affectionate feeling which dictated this wish?

The tear for a moment glistened in her eye, as Charlotte made some allusion to this idea, and a pretty smile chased it away as she spoke of the necessity that youth and beauty like hers should be seen, and not immured for ever in the dungeon-keep of domestic quiet. With fairy colours she brought before her a bright and alluring sketch of admiration and society; and cold and blank the once still more cheering picture fell neglected, dark, and gloomy beneath her touch.

Sophy smiled: it was a pretty vision. No wonder then that she should smile, and with a pettish and decided air resolve that neither will or whim should interpose, to bid the vision fade away. A husband's wish was now but a tyrant's caprice; and could she, this gay being, all brightness and sunshine, waste beauty, youth, and gladness in uncongenial gloom?

Charlotte Daventry looked upon her cousin, as blooming, and lovely, she sat before her, and

the question was answered as affection dictated. "No, no," she fondly whispered, "it must not be! Who would immure a being such as this?"

Sophy laughed, as Charlotte spoke with playful admiration and enthusiasm; and then what should follow but that they must be gay! Archeries, balls, large parties at country houses, and still more charming large parties at home, passed in quick succession. It was very delightful.

"How often we have met Captain Herbert lately!" was Sophy's remark to her cousin one day.

"If you were kind, you ought to pity two people for that," said Charlotte. "One is your very humble servant, Charlotte Daventry; the other your very humble—no, not humble—what word shall I use that is more applicable to the person in question? your very *devoted* servant, Captain Herbert himself. If you were kind, you ought to be very uneasy about me, for I am running the most imminent risk of losing my heart to a person who does not care a single sou for its possession: and you have no pity!

nothing but the conviction of something I will not name to you could have preserved me from being profoundly in love long ago. But there is one thing! and for that, pity again—pity, my Lady Stoketon, is required from you! but you will not grant it, I see by that look. I don't know a more agreeable person," she added after a little pause, and in a more serious tone than that in which she had just spoken. "I do not know a more agreeable person. A woman might well be proud who could captivate such a person," continued she, rather as if thinking aloud, than addressing another.

Sophy had laughed as Charlotte first spoke: she had made no other answer: she now got up to fetch a drawing which lay in the other part of the room, and remained for two or three minutes looking over a port-folio at the distant table before she returned. Whether she had attended to her cousin's last remarks it was impossible to say.

As she returned, Charlotte addressed her with what appeared to have been the result of her deliberations, "Lord Stoketon is not so tall as Captain Herbert."

“ Oh no !” was the reply.

“ Did you observe how well he looked the other night at the ball,” continued Charlotte, as if apropos of what she had last said. “ There was a group of people standing together—a little knot of what are called very good-looking people, and so they were, no doubt : but Captain Herbert was a little taller than the rest, and there was something so distingué about him, that made all around him look ill. Moreover it seemed that, though others were aware of it, he was not : he was thinking of something else : he was watching another person,” and she looked archly at Sophy as she paused.

Sophy stooped over her work, and blushed. She was at that moment ashamed and mortified at herself, for being *able* to do so on Captain Herbert’s account. Charlotte saw the blush and smiled ; but she appeared unconscious and was going to say more upon Captain Herbert, and the ball, when Lady Stoketon raised her head, and interrupted all farther discussion on these subjects by beginning to speak of her little boy. She *would* not hear more about Captain Her-

bert: a feeling of something wrong had struck her, as she felt the colour mount to her face. She would no longer be so, and she spoke of her child.

Charlotte Daventry remained six weeks at Alford. Her going was delayed day after day: neither Sophy nor Lord Stoketon could part with her. In short, if the truth must be spoken, they both felt at that time a shyness of being left to amuse one another. The presence of a third person was desirable: there was that between them which made both afraid of the awkwardness of a tête-à-tête. They were neither of them happy. The delightful vision of pleasure which continued gaiety was expected to realize, had disappointed in its actual presence, and though Sophy had obtained her wish, and indulged in one unceasing course of dissipation, she had been far from happy! many who beheld her, sparkling, and animated in society, would scarcely have believed that so it was; and many more had envied her, who saw not into the heart, and read in that the unhappiness which was springing from a reproving conscience.

Lord Stoketon felt uneasy at Sophy's excessive love of gaiety. He had hinted to her that he had rather she should remain more quietly at home : she saw that he disliked her going out so much ; she felt that she was wrong, but she would not or could not give up her amusement to his wishes. Charlotte seemed to think that he was unjust in wishing her to stay at home, and that in fact it was he who was to blame, and not herself ; still conscience but too often whispered to her heart a different, and a less flattering tale. Charlotte seemed to think that if she relinquished her amusements to his caprice so early, it would lead to her becoming a complete slave.

“ And if Charlotte thinks so, I dare say she is right,” thought she, “ for she is so very fond of George. I must not give up to his whims. Charlotte would think it very weak if I did, and it was but the other day she praised my firmness. To be sure, George is very good-natured, and he certainly wishes that I should enter into society moderately, and I really have had a great deal, and perhaps he is right.”

Unluckily just as Lady Stoketon had got thus far in more salutary reflections, a card of Captain Herbert's was put into her hands, and at the same time a note from Lady Frances Drakely, which conjured up a train of pleasing and flattering images, and when the note was answered and she resumed her reflections, the tone in which they were pursued was different.

“ I feel that I am quite right in going from home. What very young married woman, pretty, and admired as I am, as Charlotte says, would stay at home, even as much as I do? I gave up London this year because he wished it. I am sure he need not be afraid of my allowing any one's attentions too far, and he ought to be satisfied with that.”

Such as these were her reflections at times, and she continued her gaiety whilst her husband watched her with painful anxiety. He entrusted his grievances to Charlotte. She entered fully into his feelings and allowed, with a sigh, that they were not unfounded. If Sophy's natural good feeling did not lead her to prefer the happiness of her husband to her own amuse-

ment, what could be done? Nothing indeed. Charlotte Daventry sighed again, as she said, "Nothing can be done."

"One should have thought," she would add, "that with such a husband, with that sweet infant, everything so attractive at home, she might have been contented to remain in it; she might have found her pleasures there rather than elsewhere."

Lord Stoketon saw with pain that she fully acknowledged his cause for uneasiness. Even under her ardent desire to diminish his distress, truth often obliged her to aggravate it. She appeared to think that his only means of retaining any part of Sophy's affection was by leaving her to the enjoyment of happiness in her own way, and that if anything were likely to bring her to a sense of her duty to him, it would be by his forbearing kindness and generosity now.

Things were in this state between the husband and wife when Charlotte Daventry quitted them. Captain Herbert was become Sophy's almost constant attendant at all the places where

they met. His vanity had been flattered at first by the idea that she who was so pretty and admired entertained a partiality for him, and had been piqued by his indifference when they met after her marriage. Vanity had been the commencement of his attentions ; stronger feelings might have secured their continuance. Sophy's vanity had likewise first been touched by the idea of this gay, handsome, popular man being unhappy on her account ; it was this made her throw a little kindness into her manner towards him. Vanity led her to keep up his admiration for her : vanity led her at last to think his attentions very agreeable — his *constant* attentions quite indispensable, and vanity, at the time Charlotte Daventry quitted Alford, was leading her into still farther error : she was then in danger—imminent danger.

“ Good-bye, dear Charlotte,” sobbed Lady Stoketon as she kissed her over and over again ; “ Good-bye, dearest Charlotte, I cannot bear to part with you.”

Sophy was displeased with herself and she was unhappy. She could not bear to part with

Charlotte, though she had her husband left to her.

“ Good-bye, Charlotte,” said Lord Stoketon, “ God bless you,” and he wrung her hand as he handed her into the carriage ; and he returned to the house to conceal his emotion—the emotion caused by the feeling that he was losing the affections of his wife.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“GOOD BYE! pressure of the hand! tears! Yes! that is as it should be,” said Charlotte Daventry, to herself. “There were no tears—no hands pressed before! And now to my home! Now to keep the fire alive! to gently hint, and softly insinuate—to breathe his name! she shall not forget. No! and yet —Charlotte Daventry what have you gained? where is your reward? *Reward!* that is not it! Is it not to escape a father’s curse—a father’s dying looks! the death struggle—the horror—the ghastly despair? Not to see it—not to have it ever,

glaring—weighing—pressing on my heart”—she gasped—“is it not reward?”

She paused; a thrill of horror crept through her veins.

“Oh! let the happy guess what are the rewards of despair! let them turn with shuddering from the reward of successful revenge! let them turn with thankfulness, and say, “Blessed are they who escape such reward! Have I not turned in anguish as I saw her, suffering, sorrowing, pitied, sorrowed over! Yes! have I not turned away in the bitterness of my envy—in the anguish of envying what others wept to see. Theirs was blessedness to what I felt. She could be cheerful! she could smile. How have I cursed that smile! it was serene and peaceful; and *I!* I was gay—I could laugh! but the peace, the stillness of that sorrowing smile seemed to curse me—to mock me, with the envy that it raised. Have I not schemed, worked, toiled — forgot all love, forgot all hope, all pity, all remorse! schemed, succeeded; yet still a serpent rankling here: that death-like body ever lying, struggling

there, without one moment free!—and yet, I laugh at all!” and Charlotte Daventry laughed aloud; but none heard that laugh—the carriage rolled rapidly along, and she was soon smiling with affectionate pleasure, as she received the hearty welcome of her Aunt, and Uncle, and cousins at Weston.

When they retired to their chambers, Anne was to hear from her all she had to tell of Sophy. She related something of her gaiety—something of Lord Stoketon’s unhappiness: she drew a melancholy picture of domestic discomfort at Alford. Anne retired to rest, to feel that although her own unhappiness had been great, and though she still suffered more than she would own to any but herself, that hers was nothing in comparison to that which might be dreaded for Sophy. There was no self-reproach to be mingled with her own sorrow; but, Sophy—poor Sophy!—how would it be with her?

Anne could not sleep that night: she could only think of the risk that her sister was running, and of what might be done to save her.

Charlotte's words rang incessantly in her ears, as she described the folly and vanity of Sophy : as she spoke of the attentions of Captain Herbert ; as she drew with vivid colours the distress of Lord Stoketon. Her words still rang in her ears, with all the distinctness with which they had first struck upon her, and filled her with sorrow and dismay.

Sophy was indeed in danger. The career of folly was begun, and when once commenced how seldom does it pause in its course ! how seldom does it stop but when checked by a strong, determined hand ! how seldom does it not rush onward with increasing speed, till, like a headlong mountain stream, it falls into the abyss of sin and crime below ! And so might it have been in the case of this young and thoughtless being : but the danger was averted, and she was saved, as not unfrequently happens, from an evil of which she had no apprehension, by that which she would most have dreaded to befall her.

Two days after Charlotte's arrival at Weston, a letter came from Lord Stoketon, saying

that their child had been taken alarmingly ill. He said that Sophy was in the greatest distress, and he begged that Anne might be allowed to come to her, for she was so overcome with anxiety and apprehension that he feared her health would suffer. In such a case what could be of such service and comfort to her as the support of her sister's presence, and he earnestly entreated that Anne might be permitted to come to them immediately.

The letter was written in the greatest agitation and distress; there could not be a question as to the propriety of complying with his request, and Anne set off directly on her journey to Alford.

As she quitted home, she felt that even sickness and sorrow might be turned into blessings at times, for she saw, in Sophy's distress, a hope that she might be snatched from the danger that hung over her—that it was not yet too late to restore her once more to her sense of duty, and to domestic happiness and confidence.

When Anne reached Alford she found her

sister completely exhausted by agitation and alarm. It was evident that her conscience had smitten her, perhaps with many serious faults, and amongst others with neglect of her child. The distress was too poignant to be accounted for in any other way.

The child still lived : faint hopes were entertained of its recovery ; but it seemed scarcely probable they should be realized. Anne tried to make Sophy take some rest, but she would not be separated from her baby. She remained constantly weeping over it, as it lay with its eyes half closed ;—pale, and with life, apparently, all but extinct.

Sophy would not be moved from the room. Her eyes were fixed on her child in speechless agony, lest it should have ceased to breathe without her being aware of it. Whenever she could spare a moment from this painful contemplation, she turned her eyes towards her husband, whilst the tears streamed down her cheeks, and she seemed by her looks to ask forgiveness.

It was an affecting sight, and yet Anne

could almost find comfort in it. Better that even the child should die, than that Sophy should continue her career of folly till repentance was too late!—She had been saved but just in time! Anne knew not how nearly, or she would have thought that even the degree of sorrow evinced by her, as she hung over the cradle of her infant, was but equal to the occasion which called it forth.

Still more affecting was it to witness Lord Stoketon's emotion—his anxiety for his wife. All his devoted fondness returned, when he saw her thus repentant and suffering. He forgot all her foibles—her errors—all but that she was the wife whom he had loved. She was now in distress—and he would not remember that it partly arose from her own misconduct. As he saw her fond, imploring, penitent looks at himself, saw her bending over her child in speechless misery, he could scarcely conceal his agitation. He was often obliged to leave the room, to give vent alone to the feelings which he could not controul.

But the penitent prayers of the mother

were heard. The child, after lying in a state of insensibility for nearly a week, looking, still, calm, and motionless, like a beautiful corpse, recovered. Signs of consciousness returned.

It seemed half cruel to wish for its return. It looked, as it lay on its nurse's lap, like a being of another world—too calm, too lovely, and too placid, for earth. It seemed in its sinless purity to belong to Heaven, and who would wish that it should return to life—to be defaced with sin—to suffer—to lose its heavenly beauty, and be brought once more to earth!

Yet the mother could not feel thus. She could feel nothing but the excess of joy, as her child was restored to her—of ecstasy so great—so overpowering, that the sobs burst from her as she heard those blessed words, “The child is out of danger!” and saw the little infant uncloset its eyes, and heard its feeble cry.

The mother's heart at that moment was too full. Overcome with gratitude, with ecstasy, she could only weep, and, falling on her knees, lift up her soul in thankfulness to the God who had heard her prayers—who had relieved

her from the dreadful sense of unavailing remorse.

Her husband's prayers mingled with hers, as he hid his face in his hands and sobbed aloud, then clasped his wife to his bosom, and all sorrow, all anxiety, all estrangement were forgotten at that moment by both, once more restored to confidence and joy.

Anne could only weep and pray with them. Her heart was full. She had sorrowed—she had prayed; her gentle spirit had grieved; and she had now her reward. Her humble heart now swelled with gratitude to God, and on her knees she prayed that she might be grateful for the blessing of that hour:—that her own lot, cheerless as it was—blighted as her happiness had been, might never raise one murmur in her breast—that, with blessings thus granted to her prayers, she might bear without one repining thought the sorrow which had cast its sadness on her own peculiar path.

Anne returned home with a peaceful and contented heart. She left Sophy and her husband once more happy together, and in Sophy's

mind an impression which she believed would never be effaced, and which she trusted would have a beneficial effect on the whole future course of her life. She returned to Weston, and with joy, which she knew would be participated, she imparted to Charlotte the whole of what had passed. Charlotte fully sympathised in her feelings of thankfulness and delight. Nay, she even went beyond them in her expressions of joy.

No sooner had Anne related all she had to tell, than Robert Dodson entered.

“Here is Anne come back,” said Charlotte, “and see! she is blooming as a rose once more! all the lilies which have been usurping undue power are vanishing like April showers. But, alas! I see,” she added, with a momentary sadness in her tone, as she watched the bright colour fading from Anne’s cheeks; “Like them, alas! they have only vanished to return!”

Anne smiled, but it was half mournfully.

“Still,” resumed Charlotte in a lively tone, “let us rejoice in the sun-shine whilst it lasts! It seldom lingers long!” and she laughed with

something of discordant gaiety. "We have excellent news to tell," continued she to Robert Dodson. "The baby is quite well, and Sophy happy as a queen! as we used to say, when queens were happy! It is all 'couleur de rose' at Alford. I am so happy!"

"I am very glad, indeed!" said Robert Dodson; and to do him justice, we believe that he only said what he felt; but whether some of his pleasure did not arise from Charlotte Daventry's very cordial manner, and the impression that she was 'so happy,' we cannot pretend to say.

He certainly looked at her with great delight. She was in high spirits, and they seemed to rise still higher during his visit. They rose to an extraordinary pitch: Anne was almost startled at this exuberance of glee. Robert Dodson was in rapture. He gazed upon Charlotte as she talked and laughed, watched her fascinating smiles, and flashing eyes, listened to the laughter which every now and then burst in unchecked merriment from her lips, watched the bright colour mantling on

her cheeks—looked, listened, and thought he never had seen so captivating a being. No wonder when all this beauty and animation were called forth on his approach, were lavished on him, that the sober matter of fact Robert Dodson should very nearly forget the cautious reserve inculcated by two former refusals.

He always made some blunders. He had blundered twice in proposing to Anne. He was now very near blundering into a proposal to Charlotte Daventry; from that he was saved by the presence of Anne; but not to miss his blunder altogether, he turned to Anne and said, “We had a very pleasant visit to Chatterton the other day. Miss Foley seems a very nice girl, and Mrs. Foley very amiable indeed. They were wondering why your friend Mr. Temple never came to Chatterton now: they had asked him several times, and he never would come. I told them he had not been to Weston of late, though I knew he came very often at one time. Have you seen him lately?”

This was distressing to Anne. She had partly schooled herself into hearing his name

without emotion ; but still there was no question she could so ill bear to be asked as whether she had seen him lately.

Yet she answered composedly, “ No, not for some time,” and then became busily occupied in her drawing, whilst Robert Dodson turned to Charlotte again, and renewed his conversation with her.

Robert Dodson’s remark had given rise to some painful thoughts, and Anne was left at full liberty to indulge them. Here was an additional proof, if any were wanting, of Edward Temple’s indifference. He refused all invitations into the neighbourhood—he knew she had been ill—he knew she had been near dying. She was aware of that fact, for she had since seen Sir Henry Poynton, and he had related the whole circumstance of his receiving the letter, and telling those present of her dangerous illness : he had enumerated with gratuitous kindness the names of all the party assembled in the house, and that of Edward Temple, of course, was not omitted. He knew it then ! and yet he continued to have no wish to see her.

Robert Dodson's information discovered to Anne that she had indulged a hope, scarcely allowed to herself, till she experienced its disappointment: but here was a convincing proof of his continued indifference, and she saw the folly of her hope. She leant over her drawing, engaged in painful reflections, angry at herself, yet thinking for a moment with repining discontent on her unhappy situation.

It was but a momentary feeling. Anne Grey was once more herself. She would be content and grateful for her lot; happy in the feeling that her duty could no less be performed—her end in life no less fulfilled, though the sun-shine of existence was gone—though the brightness of youth and hope were extinct.

About this period Anne was invited to Hadley. Lady Hadley's affection for her had never diminished, and she was always anxious to secure her society: she had felt the greatest distress at her alarming illness, and could not help fearing that something more than illness had effected the melancholy change she observed with so much sorrow.

On Anne's arrival at Hadley, she found that her old friend, Sir Henry Poynton, was there, and she met him with pleasure. Her fondness for Sir Henry might, perhaps, partly arise from agreeable associations. She had first met him in company with Edward Temple, and it was in his company that she had last seen him. But there was now more of pain than pleasure in the association, and Sir Henry might reasonably flatter himself that it was for his own sake that Anne smiled so kindly in welcome, as she extended her hand to him on her arrival at Hadley.

"You are tired, I fear?" said Lady Hadley affectionately to her, as she observed her paleness.

In truth, Anne was tired and overcome. She had not been at Hadley since the period of her illness, and all the distress which had preceded it, and there were many recollections attached to the place, which rendered it most painful to her to visit it again.

She allowed that she was a little fatigued. Sir Henry looked at her with interest as he

said, "Take care of yourself, Miss Anne! you cannot take too much care. Let me recommend a little wine made hot, and some sugar, and a little cinnamon in it. It is an excellent thing! I can assure you it always does me good! I always take it after a day's shooting."

Anne thanked him, but refused his recommendation.

"We have not a very large party with us," said Lady Hadley to Anne; "but some, whom I think you know: the Denhams, whom I remember you met here some time ago. Caroline Denham is still Caroline Denham, though it seems very doubtful how long she may remain so. You recollect them?"

Yes, Anne remembered the Denhams. She remembered well whom she had met at Hadley at the same time. How changed in feeling to what she had then been! Poor Anne sighed, as Lady Hadley quitted the room, and she seated herself over the fire, and for some moments indulged in a mournful reverie. But she soon roused herself, recalled her thoughts to

the present with all its duties and cares ; and, her toilet finished, she descended the stairs looking even more lovely and interesting, in her increased pensiveness, than when she had formerly descended those stairs, happy and glowing with animation and brightness to expect the eager welcome of Edward Temple.

She descended and opened the drawing-room door, and once more she found herself in his presence.

CHAPTER XIX.

As Anne found herself thus suddenly and unexpectedly brought into the presence of Edward Temple, it was a strong effort of self-command which saved her. She felt that she *must* subdue her emotion. He was standing near the door; he was not speaking to any one; he was so close to her that she could not help noticing him.

He turned towards her. She tried to speak, but could not, and she felt the colour rushing to her face, and again receding. He seemed likewise confused. There was something cer-

tainly unusual in his manner; he did not attempt to shake hands, he merely said—she scarcely knew what, slightly bowed, and then abruptly turned away, whilst Anne remained to recover her composure as best she might.

If any hope had ever lingered in her mind, it was now extinguished. Nothing could be so plainly marked as that whatever interest he had formerly felt in her was entirely at an end. His manner bespoke a complete change of feeling, and a slight degree of confusion at this sudden meeting shewed his consciousness that his conduct was open to censure.

Anne exerted herself to overcome her emotion. She entered into conversation with Lord Hadley, and succeeded so well in repressing her feelings, as soon to be able to smile and listen to him with composed attention. She never looked at Mr. Temple again, but she believed he was silent. She did not hear him talking and laughing as usual, or rather making others laugh and talk. He certainly was not gay.

During the evening she studiously avoided

being near him, and it appeared that he was no less anxious than herself to avoid all necessity of addressing her.

Anne retired to rest with a mournful feeling of depression. She had seen him; there was no longer a doubt, and how despicable did his character appear! how much ought she to despise herself for ever having loved him. Alas! Anne felt, in that moment of utter despondency, that it was not only for having once loved him; she was conscious of still loving him! in spite of every assurance of his unworthiness, she still could not regard him with indifference. But she resolved that this weakness should no longer be allowed to exist; she resolved to think of him in future only as he deserved, and to shew by her composure on the morrow how little place he retained in her heart.

We will not too severely scrutinize Anne's behaviour on the following days. We will not try to find fault with her, if every now and then a little emotion was betrayed. Her resolutions were good, but we cannot pretend that she was free from any weakness.

Once she found herself almost alone with Edward Temple. They had both been listening to Miss Denham's singing, when Miss Denham was called away from the instrument by her mother, who detained her some time to teach Lady Hadley a stitch which she herself had forgotten. Anne and Edward Temple were thus left to a tête-à-tête. Anne was confused, she felt as if she could hardly breathe. Edward Temple took up a music book, turned over the leaves, looked at Anne for an instant, but said nothing. However, it seemed as if he thought the silence was awkward, and after a few minutes he spoke. It was the first time that he had directly addressed her since they had been together.

"I am sorry not to see Mr. Grey here," was his remark. "I hope that he and Mrs. Grey are well?"

This was very common-place from Mr. Temple, and procured a very common-place reply, but that was not so strange.

Anne coldly replied that they were both well.

“ I fear,”—Edward Temple began, but he stopped, took up the music book again, and merely said, “ I hope you intend singing this evening?”

Anne said she had sung but little lately. He looked at her as she replied, but it was but for an instant. She had recourse to a music book, and both were occupied in turning over the leaves of Miss Denham’s songs and waltzes.

Edward Temple seemed to feel the absurdity of their situation. He was evidently annoyed by it.

“ What an endless message Lady Denham’s must be!” said he. “ Miss Denham has forgotten that we are waiting for another song;” and he half got up to go away, when happily his impatience and Anne’s confusion were dispelled by Miss Denham’s return.

He did not stay, however, to hear more than half her song. He retired to the other end of the room, and Anne observed that for the remainder of the evening he scarcely uttered a word to any one.

Perhaps she might be gratified by this :

there was something less galling to her feelings to see him thus silent and apparently out of spirits, than if he had been as gay and entertaining as usual.

If, however, she did find comfort in this, she was doomed to be deprived of it on the morrow. He seemed to resolve on that day to make ample amends for his former dulness and silence by pouring forth all his powers of entertainment.

Never had Edward Temple been more brilliant, more inimitable in his vein of light humour, or in his graver conversational powers. Anne listened, and her heart sunk within her. She reached her room that evening to give vent to the wretchedness of a broken spirit, to the depression of a heart wounded to the quick by the unfeeling gaiety of one who had once pretended to love her, and who had deserted her without a pang!

She had often thought of the *probability* of his gaiety. She had imagined it at times with a sensation of bitterness, but she had always turned from the idea. She wished to

believe it impossible, but now she had witnessed it; now she had been in his presence—forced to endure, with a sinking spirit and broken heart, the sound of his voice—the sight of his gaiety—to see him laughing and happy, careless of her sufferings. Could he remember all that had passed? could he remember all that he had said? could he, really, remember that last day? his assurances that he should never change? could he remember all this? No, it must be all forgotten, or he never would have been as he had been this day. He saw that she was suffering, he must see it, for she felt that her wretchedness that evening would not be concealed. It had called forth Lady Hadley's remarks, Sir Henry Poynton's,—she had been obliged to plead a head-ache, and to retire early to her room, and there she wept for hours.

All the past had rushed too forcibly on her mind, as she saw him again, to allow her to be calm and careless. *He* might forget—he evidently had forgotten, but *she* could not. He had asked her not to forget. Oh! in what

heartless cruelty had that request been made ! He had asked her with eager, fond entreaty not to forget, and she had promised by her look that she would not ; she had fulfilled her promise. It was bitterly fulfilled. It was to no purpose she repeated to herself ‘ I ought to despise him : ’ she could not succeed in forgetting that she once had loved him, and she thought with painful agitation of the necessity of spending two more days in his society. A night of reflection restored her self-command.

The two remaining days of her visit at Hadley passed without anything peculiarly agitating, and unmarked by anything, save the continuance of Edward Temple’s indifference, and his evident avoidance of all conversation with her. He had only once seemed aware of her presence, and that when Lady Hadley was talking to her one morning.

Lady Hadley had been speaking of the Foleys. She named George Foley as one of whom she had a very high opinion. Anne chanced to look up as Lady Hadley spoke, and she saw that Edward Temple had his eyes fixed on her.

Lady Hadley asked her whether George Foley was now at home, and she blushed deeply as she replied. She was, however, spared from the idea that her confusion was long remarked by him, for in a few minutes he left the room.

“He was, perhaps, observing for the first time the change in my appearance,” thought Anne, “since last he saw me. I am somewhat paler, it is true; others could remark it, and be concerned at it, and, perhaps, at last, even he has been struck by it.”

However this might be, Edward Temple’s indifference was evident, and Anne tried to feel glad in being thus thoroughly convinced of the fact. It was the best cure for any remaining weakness in his favour, as it could not fail to convince her most satisfactorily of his unworthiness. She listened to his agreeableness, his wit, the air of sense, and of good feeling he knew how to throw over his conversation, but she could no longer be deceived by it. Her manner, after the first few days, was cold and distant, as her nature permitted. Gentle and forgiving as she was, she had real firm-

ness and dignity of character; and Edward Temple might have felt that he had fallen in her estimation, and that she was not again to be trifled with.

The visit to Hadley gave George Foley a better chance of success with Anne than he had heretofore possessed. She almost acknowledged the fact, as she drove home, depressed in spirits, unhappy, and forlorn. She began to blame herself for allowing her attachment to Edward Temple to prevent her from fulfilling the wishes of her parents in accepting George Foley. He was thoroughly estimable: she had the highest opinion of his character, and of the steadiness of his attachment: she could find no objection to him, but that which her preference to Edward Temple suggested, and that! how could she compare the two? How superior did George Foley now appear to the person she had so blindly loved. The comparison was every way in his favour.

Her judgment told her that it would be wrong any longer to reject his addresses, whilst by their acceptance she might fulfil the ardent

wishes of her parents. She returned home determined no longer to meet his advances with coldness, but to endeavour, if possible, to learn to love George Foley.

She remained firm to her resolution during the week that she remained at home. On the next her good resolutions were to be put to the test, for all the party were going to Chatterton.

The day before they went, Mr. Grey was unexpectedly called away by business, which he feared would detain him a day or two. It was arranged he should join them at Chatterton if able to return.

The day arrived, and they went; and as if to assist Anne in her endeavours to dislike Edward Temple, and to love George Foley, Edward Temple himself was there.

CHAPTER XX.

ANNE did not, perhaps, feel in full force the advantage which the presence of Edward Temple might prove to George Foley's claims. However, she was composed in her manner as she met him, and Charlotte Daventry praised her very warmly for her firmness and dignity.

"Nothing could be better than your manner," said she, when they were alone. "Persevere, my dear, and I shall be proud of you."

Anne smiled, but it was not a happy smile,

though she tried hard to feel so, and to smile as if she were.

“He met all of you as if he were glad to see you,” observed Anne.

“Had he any feeling,” said Charlotte, “he could not have done so!”

“Very true,” sighed Anne, and she sat down forgetting she had to change her morning attire, till Mrs. Watson reminded her of the hour; and she then started up and dressed so quickly that Mrs. Watson wished she had been a little less hurried.

“I had not time to smooth that plait. I am afraid Mrs. Foley will not praise the hair to-day. I wish I could have just smoothed that plait again,” thought Mrs. Watson as Anne left the room.

Anne found the party assembled. Edward Temple was in the room. George Foley, whom she had not yet seen, came forward immediately to meet her, and she welcomed him so cordially that he was happy for the remainder of the evening.

Edward Temple just looked at her as she

entered and spoke to George Foley, and this was all the attention he bestowed on her during the evening. He talked to Charlotte Daven-try a little : and when Anne and she were alone again together at night, she told her how much it had annoyed her to be obliged to talk to him, and how nearly she had betrayed her indignation.

“ You concealed it very well, dearest Charlotte,” said Anne affectionately, “ and I thanked you for it from my heart. You know how much I wish that your manner, and that of all my family, should not alter towards him, but should be as civil as usual.”

“ I talked and laughed a good deal with him,” continued Charlotte, “ as I would to any mere stranger. He might, perhaps, be aware that my style of conversation did not evince any great friendship for him.”

“ Did he ever mention my name ?” said Anne, after a little pause.

“ Yes, he did,” said she. “ Once, only once.”

“ In what way ?” asked Anne, colouring deeply.

“It will give you no pleasure to hear,” said Charlotte kindly, “and it was merely a trifling remark.”

“I wish to hear,” said Anne. “The less flattering the better for me.”

“Well, perhaps so,” said Charlotte, as if acquiescing in what Anne said. “There was not much in it, for it merely regarded personal appearance. We were speaking of the term interesting, and what people meant when they said a person looked interesting. I said that illness often gave that look. He laughed at the idea, and said ‘No, a woman should never be ill, if she can help it. An illness always ruins a woman’s looks,’ and then, as if he almost wished to be impertinent, he added immediately, ‘Your cousin has been ill, has she not?’ Anne, I did not reply. I could not. I turned away. I was too indignant.”

Anne was silent, her heart was too full to speak. She leant her face upon her hands, and said at length in a low, tremulous voice, “Thank you, Charlotte, you were right to tell me. It was best I should know, and now good-night.

I am rather overcome, and I am better alone perhaps: good-night, dearest Charlotte. Remember," she added, as Charlotte was quitting the room, "I wish your manner to continue the same." Charlotte nodded assent and quitted her.

The unexpected presence of Edward Temple was a matter of some embarrassment to Mrs. Grey. She felt that Mr. Grey might, perhaps, have thought it as well that Anne should not be thrown again into his society, and might, if he had been there, have made some excuse for quitting the house; she was, indeed, herself so indignant with him that she very much disliked being in his presence, but still, what was to be done?

She did not know, so she would wait till Mr. Grey arrived, it could only be a day or two, and meantime Mr. Temple was very quiet and civil, and he must see how much she hated him.

The next day Anne's firmness was put to a severe trial. She was seated in the morning at a table near which were Edward Temple and Miss Ferrars, the young lady whom we

have before mentioned, as one whom Anne hoped might distract William's attention from Charlotte Daventry. She was very intimately acquainted with Mr. Temple, and there was between them all the familiarity of friends.

Anne had been talking to George Foley during a great part of the morning. He had just left her, and she could not help overhearing the conversation between Miss Ferrars and Edward Temple.

They were talking on an interesting subject, considering those between whom it was discussed. It was on constancy in love, and the comparative claims of each sex to the virtue of constancy. Miss Ferrars, of course, advocated the cause of her own, whilst Edward Temple (and how could he? Anne thought,) warmly defended that of his.

Miss Ferrars treated the subject gaily, and brought many playful, ingenious arguments in favour of her opinion. She was answered with more than equal wit by Edward Temple; but at the time that George Foley left his seat by Anne, he seemed inclined to consider the matter more gravely.

They had both begun in a lively, if not ironical tone; but by degrees, as it were, unconsciously, he became more serious—he spoke of the strength, the fervour, the steadiness of attachment in men, of the impossibility of change where once the affections were really bestowed—he judged, he said, of what his own feelings would be; he had spoken gravely, but then, seeming to recollect himself, his manner changed, the tone of persiflage was renewed, and he made Miss Ferrars laugh, as he passed an ironical eulogium on the characters of women, those beings who have no characters at all; but again, as he proceeded, he once more became serious. He spoke of the difference between the feelings of men and those of the other sex, the frivolity of their characters—easily persuaded—easily swayed by the love of gaiety and admiration.

He continued, and as he spoke, it was less as if he were addressing Miss Ferrars than thinking aloud. He described such a character as appeared gentle, affectionate, amiable. He described, in short, a character such as Anne

Grey's. She, perhaps, was not quite aware that it was so, but still she listened eagerly as he spoke. He gave a beautiful description of a woman's character—he stopped a moment.

“ This,” said he, “ is what it sometimes appears, and yet it is appearance alone.”

Anne could scarcely breathe with anxiety to hear what he would say farther.

“ It is only in appearance that it is so beautiful—only the appearance which makes us love it so warmly. We feel that we might trust to such a character,” he continued : “ we feel that, from such a mixture of firmness, gentleness, and sweetness, we might reasonably look for consistency and constancy—that the heart of such a being once touched—once, as we fondly believed our own”—he paused an instant—then added—“ From such a being we might reasonably allow ourselves to fear no change : and yet it is not so ! we must not trust even to appearances so fair as these. We shall find that constancy, strength of affection, firmness and consistency of character do not belong

to women. We may hope—we may fondly trust—but we shall be deceived.”

His voice and manner had become every instant more earnest, and he was silent for a moment, apparently occupied with his own thoughts; then suddenly recollecting himself—recollecting Miss Ferrars, he turned towards her, and with a gay tone, said, “Well, Miss Ferrars, what have you to say in favour of your sex? Not a word I see, by your doubtful look.”

“I only ask,” said Miss Ferrars, smiling, “whether you speak from experience? Whether you have ever known such a character, and known it fail? You must answer that question before I will say whether I agree with you or not.”

Anne listened: she almost leant forward to listen for Edward Temple’s answer. Her very life seemed to depend on that answer.

“That is scarcely a fair question, Miss Ferrars,” said he smiling. “However, to convince you, I will answer it. I *do* know such a character.”

Anne felt the colour rush to her face as he said so. It was an overpowering sensation of delight which caused that rush. She had listened to all he said—she could scarcely help applying it. She scarcely felt a doubt that he meant it should be applied; that when he described this character; when he spoke of the disappointment, in finding change and inconsistency in such a character, he spoke of himself and of her. Something in his voice, his manner, his forgetfulness of Miss Ferrars, seemed to carry conviction to her mind. He evidently meant that she should hear what he was saying.

The hope that such a conviction carried to Anne's mind was the most delightful she had ever yet experienced.

How could he have spoken thus, if he himself were cold and fickle? If he were guilty of anything of which the Miss Bingleys had accused him? It could not be. Anne abandoned herself to the delightful persuasion that she had been mistaken in believing his unworthiness—in believing him indifferent to her.

It was plain his absence, his carelessness of manner, had been caused by his belief in her inconstancy. She could not restrain the feelings of joy to which such an idea gave rise. She moved quietly from her seat, and quitted the room, to indulge in her own chamber in all the happiness which overflowed her heart.

Before she again quitted the room, Charlotte entered. Anne's animated countenance as she approached shewed that something pleasant had occurred, and she was soon relating to her all that had passed—all her joy—her hope—all the various emotions which were agitating her breast!

Charlotte seated herself at a table as she spoke, and as she leaned her head on her hands, her countenance was concealed from observation.

Anne finished all she had to say, and turned her beaming face towards her cousin, anxious to know whether she encouraged her hope—whether she thought it well grounded.

As she ceased to speak, Charlotte suddenly raised her head, darted a look of horror at her,

started from her seat, uttered a piercing scream, and the next moment fell senseless on the ground.

Anne's presence of mind almost forsook her, but she exerted it to the utmost. She rang the bell for assistance, and applied the only remedies in her power. Before long they proved successful ; Charlotte heaved a deep sigh, unclosed her eyes, and lay a moment still : then, roused by the sound of Anne's voice, she stretched out her arms, and again relapsed into stupor.

Once more she was recovered, and this time she appeared to have regained her self-command. She looked pale, but she soon smiled and spoke cheerfully to Anne—said it was nothing—that it had been a sudden violent pain, which had caused her fainting ; but, would not hear of having medical assistance, or even consent to have her illness named to any one. She begged the maid not to mention it to Mrs. Grey, and at last seemed so perfectly recovered that Anne became satisfied, and had time once more to think of Edward Temple—and happiness.

But before she quitted the room, Charlotte Daventry had inspired her with a doubt whether she might call that happiness. She held her hand for a moment in hers, and affectionately pressed it, whilst the maid was occupied in another part of the room, saying in a low voice : “ Do not trust too much. I had not time to speak when I wished, because of my provoking illness. But do not trust too much, Anne. You may be deceived—you know that he can deceive. *Hope*, but do not *trust*. We may hope that he is not artful, but we do not know ;” and again she said impressively and anxiously as the maid was returning towards them ; “ Do not trust.”

As Anne left the room and once more descended the stairs, it was with altered feelings. Hope was gone—hope and happiness ! for he had deceived once, and why should he not deceive again ?

Edward Temple was still in the room when she returned ; but he was no longer talking to Miss Ferrars. He was reading, and he looked up as she opened the door.

“ Yes,” thought she, (and perhaps her face at the moment expressed her indignation), “ he wishes to observe whether his artifice has been successful !”

Perhaps he remarked her look, for he immediately averted his eyes.

Anne exerted herself to talk. She listened to an excellent story of Mr. Foleys’, about his friend the Duke of ——, with great apparent interest; and then was able to enter into a lively conversation with Sir Henry Woodthorpe, a young man who was staying in the house; and she felt, though very miserable, well satisfied with her own conduct, except in one particular. George Foley had seated himself at her side, and had tried to engage her in conversation; but she could not at that moment admit of his attentions. She feared she had at first half pettishly replied to his remarks, and had at last decidedly turned away to speak to Sir Henry Woodthorpe, who was on the other side.

George Foley had evidently been hurt by her manner. He had got up, remained for

some time looking out of the window in apparent melancholy abstraction, and then had quitted the room as she continued talking to Sir Henry, with all the appearance of gaiety she could assume.

But for this, Anne would at least have been well satisfied with her own conduct ; but now, she was not only miserable at the disappointment of a momentary feeling of hope, but mortified that she had caused real pain to one whom she esteemed and regarded so sincerely as George Foley.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE first part of the evening was unmarked by any difference in Edward Temple's manner, and he seemed scarcely aware of the presence of Anne.

This at the moment was a comfort to her. It told her that her hope of the morning was not without foundation, for why, if he had wished to deceive her into a belief of his caring for her, and of having been wounded by a supposed change in her sentiments, did he not continue that deceit by now feigning some shew of interest? It was too painful not to hope,

and she would not despair, though warned of her danger by the friendly voice of Charlotte Daventry.

That evening Anne and Miss Foley were sitting at a round table, looking over some drawings. There were various port-folios, and albums, and also some of Miss Foley's sketches. Sir Henry Woodthorpe was seated beside Anne. Edward Temple joined the party; but he was on the other side of Miss Foley, and Anne had no occasion to join in conversation with him. He talked to Miss Foley, and Anne could give her attention more exclusively to Sir Henry Woodthorpe, whilst they all continued looking at the drawings.

"It is pleasant to look over old sketches," said Isabella to Mr. Temple. "It recalls so much that is agreeable—so many of the friends with whom one has witnessed the scenes before one."

Anne and Sir Henry had just then come to a pause in their conversation.

"I cannot think that there is much pleasure to be gained by the recollection," was Mr.

Temple's reply, "I do not feel that I can look back with anything but regret on the remembrance of the last few years. If those we love, and those in whom we have felt an interest, were never changed by time, it might indeed be delightful to remind ourselves of past times; but you are to be envied, Miss Foley, if you can look back with pleasure-

He stopped. Anne looked up as he finished speaking. She saw his eyes were fixed on her face. Even Anne Grey was indignant. The effrontery of such language! The evident wish to deceive her! She saw that he meant that she should apply it. She could not be silent, and she spoke in a manner which called for attention.

"It is not uncommon," said she, "for those who are apt themselves to change, to complain of change in others." She stopped, too much agitated to proceed. She had spoken in a low voice, and it had been an effort to her to speak, but, though her voice had been low, it had been firm and distinct. Edward Temple must have heard, for Miss Foley had been silent

meantime. He probably felt the reproof. He certainly changed colour, and he leant over the sketch - book he held in his hand ; but Anne was too much agitated herself to be able to observe the effect her words had produced. She was only aware that he continued silent, and that there was an awkward pause for a few seconds, which was broken by a timely remark of Miss Foley's.

Sir Henry Woodthorpe then found something to say to Anne, but she was not much inclined to attend to his agreeableness, and soon got up to join the party at the piano-forte.

She was asked to sing, and, much against her inclinations, she was forced to comply. She had been so much agitated by what had passed, that she felt almost unequal to the command of her voice.

She had sung but little since her illness, and very little since she had strove to think ill of Edward Temple. There was an association in her mind with regard to music which made it generally painful. How much more so now, when she had just been suffering from a proof

of his ungenerous conduct ! But she successfully endeavoured to be composed, though her choice, or rather Mr. Foley's and Mrs. Grey's choice of a song for her, was unfortunate. It was one of those she had often sung in former happy times at Mr. Temple's request. It had been a favorite of his, one exactly suited to her sweet plaintive voice. She sang it that evening with more than her usual expression. It seemed suited to her state of feeling, and she sung as if it were so.

All were struck with it. There was something in her look, in the tones of her voice, which touched and affected many.

Edward Temple seemed to feel it ; for he was leaning as if unconscious of the presence of all around, with his face half covered by his hands. His countenance was concealed, but he was evidently buried in thought, and that of no light or pleasurable kind.*

Anne's song was at an end. She had hardly been aware that it had excited attention. She had forgotten her habitual shyness—forgotten everything in the absorbing feeling of unhap-

piness created by one subject. She had been almost relieved by singing. The air and words that were chosen for her had suited her feelings, and had been only the natural expression of her melancholy thoughts. She became confused as she concluded. She got up, left the instrument and seated herself apart by a table on which books and drawings were scattered.

In a few minutes Edward Temple was near her. Anne felt the blood rush to her face as she found that he had seated himself at her side; but she did not lose her self-command. The music continued. Miss Ferrars was singing, and there was occupation in listening to that.

Edward Temple addressed her, but he was evidently agitated. His voice, his manner betrayed it.

“ You have often sung that song before, Miss Grey,” said he.

Anne made no answer. She could not if she had wished it; but she determined to be guarded.

“ He wishes to deceive,” thought she. “ I

will not be deceived. I will not be made less miserable one moment, only to be made more wretched the next."

Edward Temple continued, in a voice which betrayed the struggle to be calm. "You may suppose, though I know you will not acknowledge it, that it must be painful to me to hear it again. You say that those who are apt to change are most ready to accuse others of doing so. I know therefore to what accusation I lay myself open were I to speak of the pain caused by the conviction of change in others. You will not believe me," he added, with increasing agitation, "if I speak of the painful feelings that song has called forth. You cannot enter into them. It is the person who does not change," he added, in a lower voice, and looking at Anne, "and not the one who has changed who is the sufferer."

Anne could hardly controul her emotion sufficiently to reply, but she made an effort, and said in a low voice, not looking up as she did so, "There are changes which do not proceed from fickleness. We may sometimes form

wrong judgments, and then it is our duty to change. It is painful to be obliged to do so, where we have once loved,"—she corrected herself—"once esteemed—it is painful to find ourselves called upon to alter our opinion—to feel that it is our duty—"

She became painfully confused. Her emotion would not allow her to proceed. There was a moment's pause.

Edward Temple was scarcely less agitated; but he was about to reply, when Mr. Foley approached. The conversation stopped, and Anne was scarcely sorry to escape from one of so embarrassing a nature.

She was yet in doubt what to think or what to feel. She dared not hope, and yet her heart was in a flutter of joy. One moment she felt inclined to believe implicitly all that his manner implied. The next she remembered those words of Charlotte Daventry, "He knows how to deceive—do not trust him."

George Foley watched her with painful interest—watched her as she conversed with Edward Temple. He sighed. "She is lost to

me!" he said to himself. "But why should I regret if she can be happy?"

From that moment his manner towards Anne was changed. He scarcely ever allowed himself to be near her, or to talk to her. He was silent, and out of spirits. He showed neither pique nor ill-humour towards her. He merely shewed that he withdrew his claims—that he relinquished the hope which was no less dear to him because it had been fruitless.

George Foley's conduct was generous and disinterested. Anne understood it, and she wished it had been possible for her to have made him aware how much she was touched by it—how much she esteemed him for it, and how much she thanked him in her heart for the delicacy he had evinced. But without encouraging him again in false hopes she could not do so, and by her increased affection for Isabella alone, could she give any proofs of her gratitude.

The next day most of the party at Chatterton had gone out either walking or driving, whilst Anne remained at home.

Amongst the driving party were Charlotte Daventry, Miss Ferrars, and George Foley. Edward Temple and Mr. Foley were walking. Mrs. Grey and Mrs. Foley retired successively from the drawing room, and left Anne alone. She sat down to the instrument, and was engaged in playing when the door opened and Edward Temple walked in.

This was more than Anne either expected, or quite desired at that moment. She wished that he should have an opportunity of speaking and of finishing the conversation which had been interrupted by Mr. Foley on the preceding evening; and yet she felt, as the opportunity seemed to present itself, that it was too agitating to be desirable.

Anne ceased playing, and rose from the instrument as he entered.

“I am afraid I have interrupted you,” observed Mr. Temple.

He looked confused, as though he felt the awkwardness of the tête-à-tête. Anne seated herself at her work: he placed himself near her. Each seemed to be struggling for com-

posure, and Anne felt more lenient as she observed his agitation.

“It is very long since we have met in this house,” said he, “and perhaps so long that I have no right to look upon myself any longer as more than a mere acquaintance; but still as a friend” — he hesitated — “as one who has the feelings of a friend towards you, perhaps I may be allowed to offer my congratulations on what I hope,” he said half inaudibly, “may prove for your happiness.”

Anne looked up. She forgot her confusion in surprise. She looked at him a moment, and a delightful thought flashed across her mind. He saw her surprise.

“I fear I have been indiscreet. You do not admit my claim to speak of what is not yet publicly acknowledged. There *was* a time when it would have been different,” he added in a low, tremulous voice; but he checked himself. “I have not even the claim of friendship,” he continued, after a slight pause, “to excuse my intrusion. I must ask your pardon.”

Anne was not sure of his meaning. “I am

not aware to what you allude," said she. "I do not understand you."

"That is," said Edward Temple, looking at her, "you think it right not to understand me. I am sorry," he continued, in a slight tone of pique, "that I said anything on the subject; but as I have ventured thus far, I may as well explain. I hoped that my congratulations on your approaching union with Mr. George Foley might have been received from one, who had once the honour of your friendship."

Anne looked up, in a moment of astonishment, and then as quickly averted her eyes. "You are mistaken," said she. "There is no engagement between Mr. Foley and myself. There never has been any."

Edward Temple started as she spoke.

"No engagement!"—and his tone was not one of disappointment. It was fully as happy as Anne could have wished, but scarcely hoped it would have been.

He looked at her as he spoke, with such enthusiastic delight that she was obliged to

hang over her work to conceal her blushes and her happiness. His tone, his manner could not be misinterpreted, and he left her no longer the possibility of mistaking his object. He soon spoke in a way which left no doubt of his meaning, and Anne was before long satisfactorily convinced that she had been guilty of an error. She had expended very unnecessarily a great deal of praise-worthy indignation. Her indignation had been very good in itself, but it had been expended on the wrong person.

We may easily suppose that reserve and disguise once thrown aside, Anne Grey and Edward Temple had much to say to one another—much to explain, which, though very uninteresting to any other person, must certainly have been most interesting to themselves, for they were still seated at that awkward tête-à-tête, which Anne had so much dreaded, when the party returned unusually late from their drive. The door was opened by George Foley, and Anne blushed so deeply and said something so unintelligible about a pleasant drive, and being

late, as she walked past him, that he stood a moment in astonishment; then shut the door rather hastily; and at dinner that day he scarcely spoke a word, and told Mrs. Grey in the evening that he meant to leave home the next day.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. GREY arrived at Chatterton that evening. It may be imagined that he was far from feeling satisfaction, as he beheld Edward Temple. He anxiously looked at Anne, and he could not tell how to understand the appearance of happiness which he saw sparkling in her eyes : still less was he inclined to rejoice at it, for he felt with bitterness that she might be a second time the victim of deceit.

However, a few words from her as she drew him aside, seemed to remove his unpleasant feelings. The smile that was visible on her face was repeated on his own, mingled with a look

of still deeper happiness, as he for a moment pressed her hand and implanted a kiss on her cheek.

The few minutes of conversation which the presence of others alone permitted, seemed to have been sufficient. Mr. Grey the next instant was speaking to Edward Temple.

“My dear Miss Grey,” said Mrs. Foley affectionately to Anne; “I am glad to see you look well again. I really have been quite unhappy about you, and so I told Isabella; and we both have been agreeing that you could not be well. But you look quite yourself again this evening.”

Edward Temple stood near. Anne’s eye glanced for a moment towards him. How impertinent in him to smile! what heartless cruelty! yet Anne Grey smiled too, but she blushed so deeply that it shewed how much she was hurt by his cruelty.

“There is Isabella coming for you to sing, I see,” said Mrs. Foley; and Isabella approached, and Anne followed her to the instrument, sat down, and sung such a lively French song, with

such a lively heart-felt gaiety, and naive expression of merriment, that all were infected with her gaiety. Every one encored, and Anne sung again; and Edward Temple was standing over her as she sung, smiling with her, and with the others; and watching her face with delighted attention.

Anne looked at him sometimes with a pretty beginning of a smile, and then turned away a little embarrassed—probably distressed by his effrontery, and as she left the room with the other ladies, he even ventured to shake hands with her.

The whole procession of ladies at length retired to their rooms, and when they were all safely lodged in them, Anne Grey was seen passing across the passage to that of Charlotte Daventry, who had retired rather earlier than the rest. She knocked at the door, entered, and closed it after her, and what was the sight which struck her on her entrance!

Charlotte Daventry sat pale and motionless; her eyes fixed on the ground: as Anne entered, she uttered a violent scream.

“ Leave me, I tell you—leave me,” she began with frantic violence ; “ I bid you leave me. What ! must you come here to taunt me with your happiness ? Do you think I do not see it—do not feel it ? Look here, Anne Grey”—and she laid hold of her arm, and grasped it with rude violence, “ Look here, Anne Grey. You believe I love you. You believe it faithfully, implicitly.” She smiled a moment, and then the smile was gone, and revenge and hatred were stamped upon her countenance. “ Know then, that I love you so well, that I would give this arm,—I would myself hold it to be burnt to the bone—could I by that ensure misery to you—could my curse tell on you—could it wither your heart, and blacken your happiness. Aye ! I love you so well, so tenderly as this ! I hate you—I have ever hated you with a hate you know not of. Know that to me you owe your tears, your misery, your all but death. I saw you weep, and sob, and languish, and writhe !—I did it ! Yes, Anne Grey ! believe it if you will ! You

shall believe it! *I* did it! He!—why he was never false to you!—*he* never deceived any poor fond girl. Jane Bingley never spoke as I said. He always loved you!—Yes, start—turn pale. It was my work—it was only mine! It was all false—but you believed, and I was happy!” She smiled in ghastly triumph. “I tell you I loved him—I—Charlotte Daventry loved him: but she hates him now—she hates you both with a deadly, bitter hate.”

Her voice sank lower and lower, till it became almost inarticulate with the intensity of the feeling it strove to express.

Anne had sunk half-lifeless on a chair as she spoke; but still she did not faint—she heard every word. She remained perfectly still; looking in terrified astonishment on Charlotte, half stupified with what she heard. But when Charlotte ceased, it recalled her to a sense of her situation. She felt all but fainting; but she made a violent effort—reached the door—closed it—ran along the passage—gained her own room, and then sunk senseless on the floor.

When she came to herself, and to a recol-

lection of what had passed, her first thought was to call her father, and take him to Charlotte's room before help might be too late. Charlotte's insanity was too evident: she had long suspected—it was now certain. The horror of feeling that by her fainting she had lost time which might have been fatal, almost overcame her again; but she exerted herself—reached her father's room, and in a scarce articulate voice told him to go to Charlotte instantly. As he lingered for an instant to ask for some explanation, she half pushed him from the door, telling him “for God's sake to make haste!” She tried to follow him, but her powers forsook her, and as he left the room, and she felt that the immediate necessity for exertion was over, she again fainted.

- On recovering her senses, she found herself lying on the bed in Mrs. Grey's room; Mrs. Grey in violent hysterics, and Mr. Grey standing pale as death, seeming almost unconscious of what was passing around him. Anne started up, forgetting all, in her dreadful anxiety to hear the truth. She sprang from the bed, laid

her hand on her father's arm, as she looked eagerly in his face. "Tell me," said she, "what is it?"

Mr. Grey shuddered, and in a low voice as he pressed Anne's arm, he murmured, "you have saved her."

"Thank God!" was Anne's exclamation as she burst into tears.

Mr. Grey had reached Charlotte Daventry's room, and with a feeling of the most dreadful alarm, he gently tried the door as though he dreaded the sight it might reveal. The door was not locked; for a moment he stood gazing on the scene which presented itself before him. In the farther recess of the large room was Charlotte Daventry, kneeling—her hands clasped together, her eyes wildly fixed, and glaring with unnatural brilliancy; her long hair unloosed, fell down her shoulders; a bright flush was on her cheek. She knelt, and did she pray? She was too much absorbed to hear the entrance of Mr. Grey; he paused for an instant.

"She prays," he said, and her lips indeed were uttering words. They fell softly—half

inaudibly. She spoke, but it was not in prayer. "Father, you see me! Father, you are by me! I see you! I know that you smile! I come—I have failed—I die! Now, father, look on me! You do! you smile!" Her voice was raised. She half shouted again those words, "You smile!" she raised herself from her knees; she started up, her whole frame seemed imbued with energy; she put forth her hand to the table which stood near her—a phial was there. Another moment, and the deed had been done. But she was arrested: Mr. Grey sprang forward—her hand was seized—the bottle gained, and dashed on the ground.

She turned round. Her eyes glared with frenzy. For a moment she stood fixed in a deep, earnest, wondering gaze on the countenance of her uncle. It seemed as if she vainly endeavoured to understand by what means she had been foiled, as if her energies had been exerted for death, and reason could not say why, at that moment, she was not dead. For a few seconds she gazed, (oh! the horror of those seconds!) and then wresting her arm from her

uncle's hold she burst into a loud, and violent laugh.

But why dwell on scenes like this? That night Charlotte Daventry was conveyed from the house, and as the chaise wheeled along, and she sat forcibly held by the two attendants, who had been immediately sent for, her screams, her laughter, and wild exclamations might have been heard even rising above the rattling noise of the carriage.

It is useless to speak of the horror, the distress, and confusion which reigned at Chatterton on that fearful night, or to dwell on all that necessarily ensued.

On looking over the papers belonging to the unhappy Charlotte Daventry, Mr. Grey found a letter addressed to himself, which had, apparently, been written but a few hours previous to the attempted suicide. I transcribe parts of it, less incoherent than the rest, which seemed to be merely the ravings of insanity. It appeared to have been written with the consciousness in her mind of wavering reason, a consciousness she anxiously strove to repel, and to hide from others. In parts, indeed, it was so clear and

collected that, had it not been for such little touches as betrayed a heated and bewildered imagination, few could trace in it the evidences of insanity.

The passages I transcribe are as follows:—

“Some years ago, Mr. Grey, you
“took me home to your family a poor, weeping
“orphan girl. You thought you were perform-
“ing a kind, a praiseworthy action. You were
“right, for you gave the being who had *sworn*
“to hate you the opportunity she wished—
“the opportunity to do you harm! If that de-
“pendant, *grateful* orphan girl had not failed
“in her plans, you had been rewarded, but it
“had been in a way more agreeable to me
“than to you! But I failed! and yet—I have
“succeeded—succeeded in part! Yes! let me
“think with pride how much I have done,
“and let me atone by the step I am about
“to take that it has not been more! Mr.
“Grey, when first we met, and when with
“horror, which, even through years of smiles
“and grateful looks, you may perhaps re-
“member, I first saw you—the man to whose
“care and affection I had been entrusted,

“ a father’s dying words had bid me hate you
“ —bitterly hate you — from life to death—
“ through kindness and benefits;—to hate,
“ and to make that hatred tell in working evil,
“ ruin, unhappiness, to you and yours! Yes!
“ when you first beheld me I had deeply
“ sworn to let the energies of a life, of youth,
“ that season of innocence and careless joy—to
“ let all these be devoted to the toil of hate—
“ shudder as you read—even I can shudder
“ as I write!—I had sworn to forget all joy,
“ all love, all pity, all remorse, to work that
“ deadly work, to plant woe and strife where
“ happiness and peace had dwelt! *It was a*
“ *blissful task!* I smiled as I looked on that
“ calm, holy peace. I saw it, and I smiled!
“ And there was one whom I then saw: I had
“ never believed before that on earth such a
“ being could exist! gentle, affectionate—gifted
“ in mind and person! I saw with ecstasy. *She*
“ *was mine!* She should love—trust—pity.
“ Easily bruised—easily bowed down—on her
“ my toils should be expended! Yes! Anne
“ Grey, I have seen you weep.—I have *made*

“ you weep. I have lain my hand with chilling
“ bitterness upon that heart. I have seen you
“ on the point of death—your pale face—your
“ cheerless eye ! It was my work. Oh ! it was
“ a noble work ! and my father stood by, and
“ he smiled on me, and I felt that smile within
“ my heart ! I felt it, and was not mad. I am
“ not mad ! or I—I too should have wept—I
“ —I should have grieved—but no, I am not
“ mad !

* * * * *

“ I wound myself silently, carefully, into the
“ heart of that pure being. I wound and wound,
“ till every sweet affection of that heart was
“ fastly bound beneath my grasp. She loved. I
“ saw it. Here was my task, a glorious task !
“ She loved, and Charlotte Daventry loved,
“ and both loved the same object : but one
“ was loved again --and the other was suspect-
“ ed and despised ! Every nerve was strained !
“ Yes, I wrote a letter framed to cut deep
“ into her heart. Long had that letter been
“ written, ere she received it, and how did my
“ bosom throb with impatience to fly and see

“ its effect ! I came—I beheld that effect. It
“ was a blissful sight ! The lover too : him had
“ I deceived ! I whispered in his ear, George
“ Foley’s name. I whispered that Anne Grey
“ was easily persuaded — soon touched ! He
“ listened and believed.

* * * * *

“ Know that every trouble that has befallen
“ you or your house in the few years I have
“ dwelt with you, were either framed, or foster-
“ ed, or encreased by me. Ever about your
“ house, ever close to me was he—my father !
“ His cold pale form, his still, sepulchral voice !
“ ever urging me on : *you* could not see and
“ know ; but I ! he was always there ! his voice
“ —his eyes were ever with me : in the dark-
“ ness or the light alike—and his laugh ! he
“ laughed and I—I too ! Every thought and ac-
“ tion has been made subservient to his will.
“ At this moment there are three devoted fools
“ all bound to me, as they fondly believe, by
“ the tie of mutual affection : each, ignorant,
“ confiding, and deceived ! These three are
“ Frank Crawford, Robert Dodson, and (start

“ if you will) your son—your own son William !

* * * *

“ But it is of no avail now to tell you all my
“ schemes. I had one ! a noble plan ! one which
“ would have endangered your fortune—perhaps
“ your character. Two skilful, but not honest,
“ attornies would soon have been at work.
“ But fate interposed. You remember the death
“ of that maid-servant —that French girl, over
“ whose loss I mourned with such affecting ten-
“ derness ? I did grieve over her loss. She was
“ a useful tool : she could tamper with these
“ men of law ; but I lost my tool : *I* grieved,
“ and *you* were saved. Once more I proudly
“ raise my head : let me look proudly on my
“ work ! and whilst the serpent gnaws my heart
“ for deeds undone, let me still smile and laugh
“ for deeds that have been done. I have failed
“ in part ; but what have not I, a poor unas-
“ sisted girl, accomplished ? I sacrificed all to
“ this grand object. I sacrificed—you know
“ not how much ! All the pride, the feelings of,
“ a woman. To you I was the poor uneducated
“ girl. It served my purpose so to appear. You

“ did not know that I was endowed with those
“ things which captivate and charm. I was in
“ fact rich in attainment, and gifted by nature
“ with power in music, in drawing, in painting
“ and poetry—practised in all—delighting in
“ all: yet all I concealed and renounced to
“ further my one grand aim—revenge !”

* * * * *

It is needless to dwell on the feelings of Mr. Grey, as he read the letter, of which the detached parts are here given. It presented him with a fearful picture of guilt, of misery and of madness. What vigour of mind—what extraordinary resolution had been exerted in a work which human nature shuddered to contemplate. It appeared that the dreadful task which had been imposed upon her by the dying commands of her father had worked gradually but surely on her frame, till reason had sunk. Insanity had been the effect of guilt working on the mind. The energies of a powerful, violent, and ungoverned character had been devoted to a task fearful and appalling in its nature, and

insanity alone could follow the energetic devotion to such a task. What talents misapplied—what powers turned to evil—what a mind overthrown !

And this had been a father's work ! Had he witnessed the event of that day, well might he have groaned under the punishment which his fearful passions brought upon the only being whom he ever loved ! he had called for revenge, and vengeance had been turned upon himself. The child had fallen a victim to the father's guilt.

A fortnight had elapsed when we find Mr. Grey again in the presence of Charlotte Daventry. He had been sent for to attend, as it was believed, her dying bed ; and who that had seen the wretched lunatic could do otherwise than wish that death should remove her from such a state of hopeless misery !

When Mr. Grey reached the house, he was told by her attendants that the sufferer had become more calm—that the frenzy had ceased, and left her in a state of stupor. Her case was pronounced hopeless, and it could not but be

the prayer of all who knew her that she might speedily be released in death.

Mr. Grey was shewn into her room. The unhappy being lay on the bed, motionless, and apparently unconscious. As Mr. Grey entered and looked on her—*her* whom he had seen but a few short weeks ago, gay, blooming, and seemingly happy; now worn almost to a skeleton with the violence of passion, one bright, hectic flush alone tinging the deadly paleness of her face; his emotion could not be controlled. He forgot all the injury she had wrought—all the hatred she had sworn against him. He knelt by the bed—he hung over her, and fervently uttering a prayer to God for the soul of the maniac, he wept long and uncontrollably by the side of his unhappy niece. He prayed for her forgiveness—he prayed—and was indeed his prayer heard, and granted?

Charlotte lay for awhile motionless. Her uncle's tears fell on her thin attenuated hand, that seemed scarcely like that of a living being. The physician entered the room. "She cannot linger long," were his words as he looked at

her, and Mr. Grey felt, that none could think, that wasted form could indeed long remain on earth.

The bright beam of the morning sun, which at that moment streamed in through the window, fell on the death-like form of Charlotte Daventry! She moved: she stretched out her hands: she unclosed her eyes.

“Forgive—forgive—Anne Grey,” was softly murmured.

So gently had those words been spoken, that the ear could scarcely catch their tones. She raised her hand, and put it to her forehead, as if trying to recollect; and for a moment her eye fell on her uncle. She saw his tears—his look of kindness. A sudden emotion seemed to seize her; to the amazement of all around, she started up, she threw forward her arms—placed them round his neck, and in gentle, half audible accents, murmured “Forgive—pray for me—” and then again sunk back.

They looked—they waited—they watched; and whilst her uncle’s tears fell fast, he looked with breathless eagerness again to

catch some proof of penitence. He looked in vain. No movement was made. All was still—the physician laid his hand gently on Mr. Grey's arm. Charlotte Daventry was dead.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BUT we will leave the contemplation of sorrow, and pass on to a calmer and happier period. Horror, pity, and grief had in turn held their sway ; but they were now passing by, and the memory of Charlotte Daventry was ceasing to cast its sadness on the minds of those who had known and loved her. Edward Temple is established as the privileged guest at Weston, the acknowledged lover of Anne Grey ; and though we perceive that, with his usual deceit, he is trying to convince her that, however delightful he is as a lover, he will be still more so as a husband, yet what else can be expected from

such a character? And if we find Anne Grey easily trusting and deceived again, what less can we expect from one so affectionate and confiding?

We must leave her to her fate ; and may it be a happy one ! and if trust can be placed in that bright smile, in those soft tones, in those gentle eyes—but once more am I beginning, when I had almost escaped all danger of romance ? It must not be ! I will persevere to the end in the matter of fact style of my common-place story.

“ How was it possible that you could have believed in my inconstancy ? ” said Edward Temple, one day to Anne, as they sat talking together at Weston.

“ I must answer that question by another,” said she smiling. “ How was it possible you could have believed in mine ? ”

“ Confessions are not disagreeable with such a confessor,” said he, as he looked at her. “ But before I begin will you not promise me absolution for my sins ? ”

“ Yes, willingly,” said she, smiling.

“ You do not know how many I have to confess, or perhaps you would not so readily promise,” said he. “ But, to my task ; and first I broke a promise made to myself ; which was, never to fall in love.”

“ That was a foolish promise,” said Anne.

“ You will forgive it then ?” said he : “ indeed you ought,” he continued, “ for I have a perfect excuse now before me, for even a greater breach of promise. But to my faults again—I fell in love in defiance of my promise : but, no man on earth could have helped that, you must allow ? Fault the second—having in the pride of my heart made such a promise—but then I had never seen you !”

But we will give the purport only of his confession, for it would be endless to repeat the whole conversation. It must be confessed that Edward Temple had some faults. He had had too much reliance on his own firmness and discernment ; for his study of character was not always successful. It is in fact often both dangerous and deceitful.

When he came to Weston, before his depar-

ture for Paris, he had determined not to propose to Anne. He wished to put her to the test of absence. He had studied her character, and he thought that if a fault was there to be found, it was in being too easily led by the opinion of others—that the amiable and depending nature of her disposition might render her too weak and yielding: he thought that perhaps she was capable of attaching herself easily, and of easily changing from one attachment to another. He believed that she loved him; but he fancied himself not sufficiently certain that under circumstances equally favorable, she might not love another. He came to Weston, and he nearly forgot his intended prudence: but Robert Dodson and Sir Henry Poynton saved him, against his wishes at the moment, and he left Anne free from any decided engagement.

Before he quitted Paris, he heard that she had accepted George Foley. For a time he did not believe it, and he reached England still determined to see her, and to declare his feelings towards her without reserve. But in

England the report was repeated and it seemed to come from good authority. Charlotte Daventry had taken care that it should. His preconceived doubts of Anne, and his knowledge that George Foley had long loved her, gave additional force to the report. In short, so many facts concurred to attest its truth, that at length he could no longer doubt. He formed the resolution of never marrying, and never believing any woman constant; and went into the world to be gay and careless, and as he believed, to forget Anne Grey.

But after a time his desire to see her again so strongly revived, that he accepted an invitation to Chatterton. Meantime he met Charlotte Daventry at the Bingleys', and she left him no longer in doubt as to the fact of Anne's engagement to another. He determined more firmly than ever to believe all women weak and fickle, and to think every man a fool for marrying. He heard of Anne's illness, and he suffered—we need not say how much!—but still, it was for George Foley that she was to be restored. He would not see her: he would never again approach her.

Some accidental circumstance however inspired a doubt of George Foley's good fortune, and he went to Hadley. There he met Anne, and at first, he wavered in his opinion—but then he saw her blush as George Foley's name was mentioned. Still he accepted an invitation to Chatterton, and there—we know what followed. He proposed and was accepted, and it only remained for him to repent of his former folly, and to resolve in future never to trust presumptuously to his own firmness of purpose and insight into character.

My task is nearly over. Anne Grey will soon be no more, but, Anne Temple, may you be happy—as happy as you deserve, and can we give you a better or a kinder wish?

We quit our heroine, to say a few words of the other characters in our story. Of Lord and Lady Stoketon, we have little to add, but that the favourable effect produced on Sophy's mind by the alarming illness of her child, was never effaced by after years of happiness, and she remained firm to the character which she then determined to become—a good wife.

The shock of Charlotte Daventry's death had been severe to William Grey, who was absent from home at the time. He had been engaged to her, but had been persuaded by her to conceal the engagement, both on the plea of its displeasing his parents, and her doubts of the strength of her own sentiments upon so short a trial. Some years spent in travelling on the continent succeeded in diverting his feelings from the melancholy subject which too long entirely engrossed them. He returned home a sadder, but a wiser man, and before long Isabella Foley's unshaken attachment was rewarded by becoming his wife; and if she had some little oddities of temper to bear with, her own sweetness of disposition made her fully equal to the task.

George Foley strove to forget his own regrets, in the contemplation of the happiness of the woman he loved, and though it was some time before he could recover the pang which her marriage had caused him, he had so much firmness of character and good sense that he at length succeeded.

Of Frank Crawford we must say a few words. On the very day of Charlotte Daven-try's attempted suicide, he received a letter addressed to himself in her hand-writing. He was sitting alone with his father at Gled-
don, when it was put into his hands. He opened it—read a few words, then rushed out of the room, and, for many succeeding days, Frank Crawford was lying in a fearful state of fever and delirium. His life was for a time despaired of: but he recovered, and when he rose from his bed of sickness, it was as a different person. He was totally changed in disposition and mind, and when, on the death of his father a few years afterwards, he returned from the continent, he was only known to the world as the eccentric and recluse Lord Gled-
don; and at the age of forty-seven, the dwellers in that same world were again reminded that Frank Crawford had once been known amongst them by seeing in the papers the announcement of his decease.

Henry Grey, the warm-hearted, frank, intelligent boy, grew up into the warm-hearted,

frank, intelligent man. A fortune was unexpectedly left to him by a distant relation, and having found a husband for his sister Anne, whom even he allowed to be worthy of her, he now sought a partner for himself, and again was successful in his search; for Lady Emily Grey was all that could be desired to satisfy the affectionate wishes of Anne, in the wife of her brother Henry.

A few words of Lady Hadley will close the book. It will easily be believed that Edward Temple was not a less frequent and welcome visitor at Hadley, as a married, than he had been as an unmarried, man; and that Lady Hadley now looked with heartfelt pleasure on the conversion of the once melancholy house at Temple-court, into the prized and happy home of her whom she had so fondly loved as Anne Grey.

THE END.

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